

**A CRITICAL-HERMENEUTICAL INQUIRY OF SCHOOLS
AS LEARNING ORGANISATIONS**

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DECLARATION

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for the obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

In this critical-hermeneutical inquiry into schools as learning organisations I use the service provision model of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) as an exemplification of the concept of a learning organisation. In this inquiry, which is conceptual in nature, I explore whether their service provision model is sufficient to turn schools into learning organisations. With the establishment of Education Management and Development Centres (EMDCs) in the Western Cape, the WCED expressed its intention to develop schools in the Western Cape into learning organisations. I do a literature review to develop a conceptual framework of a learning organisation. From the literature review I constructed five constitutive meanings of a learning organisation. These meanings serve as conceptual lenses to explore how schools can be developed into learning organisations.

Furthermore, I analyse some of the WCED service provision policies against the five constitutive meanings. These constitutive meanings include quality, inclusivity, collaborative teamwork, communication and power, which determine if the WCED policies are consistent with its objective to develop schools into learning organisations. Through my analysis I found that the WCED's policies are not compatible with all constitutive meanings. This led me to conclude that the WCED's understanding of a learning organisation is fundamentally and conceptually flawed as the WCED's service provision model operates within a controlled and regulated environment at the expense of internal school development. Interviews and the interpretation of data further reveal that the WCED's service provision model is not adequate to develop schools into learning organisations.

This flawed understanding may have resulted partly in the WCED's adoption of a single, unitary managerialist approach to their service provision model because of the strong emphasis on compliance rather than cooperation that should exist between schools and the WCED. Based on the constitutive meanings I constructed for a learning organisation, I conclude that a managerialist approach serves the WCED's interest more than it serves the interest of teachers and classroom practice.

The main argument of this study is that a communicative deliberative idea of democracy could reconceptualise the WCED's inadequate understanding of a learning organisation. A key aspect of developing schools into learning organisations may begin with instituting better lines of communication which should include elements like reflexive discussion, communicative freedom, consensus and decision-making processes. These elements form the basis of what constitutes a learning organisation. This reconceptualised notion of a learning organisation can best be done through deliberative democracy with its emphasis on public argumentation with equal opportunity with the aim of arriving at an agreed judgement. This study suggests that the WCED adopts a communicative deliberative idea of democracy as a notion of communication which is a more ideal vehicle that could assist in developing schools into learning organisations.

KEYWORDS: school, learning organisation, EMDCs, quality education, inclusive education, collaborative teamwork, communication, power, deliberative democracy.

OPSOMMING

In hierdie kritiese verklarende ondersoek rondom skole as leerorganisasies gebruik ek die Wes-Kaapse Onderwys Departement se diensleweringmodel as 'n voorbeeld van die konsep van 'n leerorganisasie. Hierdie ondersoek is konsepsioneel in wese en bepaal of die WKOD se diensleweringmodel voldoende is om skole in leerorganisasies te ontwikkel. Met die daarstelling van Onderwys en Bestuur Ontwikkellings Sentrums (OBOSSE) in die Wes-Kaap het die WKOD sy voorneme om skole in die Wes-Kaap in leerorganisaies te ontwikkel uitgedruk. Derhalwe doen ek 'n literêre oorsig om 'n konseptuele raamwerk van 'n leerorganisasie te ontwikkel. Vanuit hierdie literêre oorsig het ek vyf konstitutiewe betekenisne naamlik (kwaliteit, inklusiwiteit, samehorige spanwerk, kommunikasie en mag) geïdentifiseer wat 'n leerorganisasie saamstel. Hierdie konstitutiewe betekenisne dien as waarneembare lense om vas te stel in hoe 'n mate skole in leerorganisasies kan ontwikkel, en of die WKOD se diensleweringmodel strook met sy oogmerk om skole in leerorganisasies te ontwikkel.

Ek analiseer vervolgens sekere WKOD diensleweringbeleide teen die konstitutiewe betekenisne om die relevansie om skole in leerorganisasies te ontwikkel vas te stel. Deur hierdie analise het ek ontdek dat nie alle beleide ten volle aan die vereistes van die konstitutiewe betekenisne voldoen nie. Derhalwe kom ek dus tot die gevolgtrekking dat die WKOD se siening van 'n leerorganisasie fundamenteel en konseptueel foutief is omdat die WKOD se diensleweringmodel werk binne die raamwerk van 'n beheerde en gekontroleerde omgewing tot die nadeel van die interne ontwikkeling van skole. Die onderhoude se interpretasie in verhouding met die vyf konstitutiewe betekenisne en beleidsdokument het verdere inligting aangaande die hoofnavorsingsvraag of die WKOD se dienslewering model genoegsaam is om skole in leerorganisasies te ontwikkel verskaf.

Ek argumenteer dat hierdie skewe siening (beeld) mag gedeeltelik daartoe bygedra het tot die WKOD se enkel eensydige bestuurstyl tot hul diensleweringmodel as gevolg van die sterk klem op onderdanigheid eerder as samewerking wat 'n ideale spangees tussen skole en die WKOD teweeg kan bring. Op grond van die konstitutiewe betekenisne wat ek geformuleer het, doen ek aan die hand dat die WKOD se

diensleweringmodel hulself bevoordeel, eerder as die belange van onderwysers en klaskamer praktyk.

Derhalwe doen ek 'n paar aanbevelings aan die hand om hierdie leemtes aan te vul en voorsien riglyne om skole in leerorganisasies te ontwikkel. Die hoofargument van hierdie ondersoek is dat beraadslagende demokrasie die WKOD se siening van 'n leerorganisasie aansienlik kan verbeter. 'n Sleutel aspek van die ontwikkeling van skole in leer organisasies mag begin by die instelling van beter vorme van kommunikasie wat elemente soos reflektiewe besprekings, kommunikatiewe vryheid, konsensus and besluitneming insluit. Hierdie elemente vorm die basis van wat 'n leer organisasie behels. Dit kan derhalwe die beste gedoen word deur beraadslagende demokrasie met sy klem op publieke argumentering met gelyke geleentheid en die klem op die daarstelling van ooreenstemmende oordeel. Hierdie studie suggereer that die WKOD die id e van beraadslagende demokrasie as 'n beginsel van kommunikasie moet aanneem wat die mees ideale vorm van demokrasie is wat hulle kan ondersteun om skole in leer organisasies te ontwikkel.

SLEUTELBEGRIPE: skool, leerorganisasie, WKOD, OBOSSE, kwaliteit onderrig, spanwerk, inklusiewe opvoeding, kommunikasie, mag, beraadslagende demokrasie.

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List of Acronyms

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMT	Change Management Team
ECD	Early Childhood Education
EDCC	Education Development Consultancy Course
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
EMDC	Education and Development Centres
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EST	Educator Support Team
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
HCDS	Human Capital Development Strategy
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HOD	Head of Department
HRD	Human Resource Development
IMG	Institutional Management and Governance
IMTEC	International Movement for Transformation and the Educational Change Foundation
LSEN	Learners with Special Education Needs
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MFT	Multi-Functional Team
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
QIDS UP	Quality Improvement Development, Support and Upliftment Programme
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
RP	Redesign Project
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SAPS	South African Police Services
SDC	Service Delivery Charter
SDIP	Service Delivery Improvement Programme

SEED	Systemic Enhancement for Educational Development
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SNE	Special Needs Education
STEDS	Systemic Transformation for Education and Support
TAP	Teacher Assistant Programme
TIP	Teachers In-service Project
UCT	University of Cape Town
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
WSE	Whole School Evaluation
WSP	Workplace Skills Plan

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation I do a critical-hermeneutical inquiry of schools as learning organisations. This means doing a critical interpretive analysis into what learning organisations are and whether the WCEDs service provision model is geared toward developing schools into learning organisations. Shortly after South Africa's first democratic election in 1994 the national Department of Education initiated a process of merging the four racially divided education departments – namely that of the Administration House of Representatives, Cape Education Department, Department of Education and Training, and the House of Delegates – into one. This merger turned out to be a complex and difficult process. Shortly after that a new service provision was introduced in the Western Cape after consultation with some relevant stakeholders in education. The motivation for this move was to bring Head Office closer to schools in an attempt to bridge the divide.

Furthermore, the philosophy behind the learning organisation is that schools take ownership of their development through a strategic linkage with the external environment while quality teaching and learning is offered at the same time. In briefly explaining the concept of a learning organisation I draw on the work of Moloji (2005: ix) who views a learning organisation in terms of “systems thinking that builds on individual, team and organisational capacities to transform schools. This initiative also envisaged closer collaboration with effective communication between Head Office and schools. This new system of service provision resulted in the establishment of seven Education Management and Development Centres, commonly known as EMDCs or District Offices that was later increased to eight EMDCs.

During the first half of 1999 the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) started on a development programme aimed at improving the service provision model

to schools by transforming the former educational bureaucracy and flattening the hierarchical structure into a broader and more co-ordinated structure. The overall aim of this endeavour was to create a more effective and efficient service provision model that would assist schools in developing into learning organisations. Because of the many changes already undertaken in terms of the educational legislation and policy framework, the WCED embarked on a Systemic Enhancement for Educational Development (SEED) programme in 1997 that eventually led to the establishment of Education Management and Development Centres (EMDCs) in 2001. This dissertation will focus on whether a better service provision model has in fact, been achieved and, if so, how this achievement can contribute to schools becoming learning organisations.

The SEED programme was set up to facilitate a partnership between the Teachers In-Service Project (TIP), the International Movement for Transformation and the Educational Change Foundation (IMTEC) in collaboration with the WCED. It was a three-year pilot programme aimed at providing organisational development and training intervention at all levels of the schooling system: the classroom, the school, the District Office and the Head Office of the WCED, with the following aims:

- Building capacity within the WCED to provide effective support for schools;
- Stimulating the desire to change, bring coherence to what was then a fragmented WCED;
- Assisting the WCED to turn schools into learning organisations;
- Training principals, management teams and WCED staff;
- Establishing an Education Development Consultancy Course (EDCC) to train 10 consultants to work at various levels of intervention in the transformation process.

The aim of EMDCs is to create a new organisational model for supporting school development. After much deliberation between the public sector unions and the national government, a Change Management Team (CMT) was established within the WCED in 1999 in order to ensure the continuation of the change process. The CMT was later renamed the Systemic Transformation for Education Development and Support (STEDS). STEDS was later divided into different teams, each with its own

specific job description. In January 2000 Mr Brian O'Connell, then Superintendent-General of the WCED, commissioned a research project to be conducted jointly by the WCED, University of the Western Cape (UWC), the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the Teachers In-service Project (TIP). In early 2001 the WCED's area boundaries were reduced from nine to seven areas, each served by its own EMDC.

When dealing with organisational development initiatives, complications and problems will inevitably surface. These complications should be dealt with as they arise. In the case of the WCED, the struggle is far from over. As the developmental process unfolds, new challenges manifest themselves in new ways which require innovative approaches and new understandings. The newly established EMDCs were no exception. As the developmental process unfolds, new issues and problems usually emerge that may necessitate different strategies and redirection of interventions. As Carr and Kemmis (1986:39) puts it: "Education is a social activity with social consequences." This implies that the consequences of an educational developmental process can never fully be anticipated.

Developmental processes, especially social development, have unintended consequences and are never immune to revision. It is therefore required that relevant stakeholders of educational development build educational theory through critical reflection (communication) so that educational practices should be subjected to scrutiny. However, it should be understood that both theory and practice are subject to change as experiences and wisdom are gained, and the developmental process unfolds. Subsequently, constant communication is needed between the WCED, District Offices and schools. In the following section I now present a rationale of my study.

1.2 RATIONALE OF STUDY

The primary aim of this dissertation is to conduct a critical hermeneutical inquiry into schools as learning organisations. I shall later expound on the concept of learning organisation. Here I need to state that the WCED and schools is the unit of analysis. In this situation all school stakeholders (principals, management and staff) learn how to develop their schools into learning organisations. The WCED and District Offices offers support to schools through their service provision model. Since the WCED

aims to develop schools into learning organisations, the assumption is that their service provision model is based on their understanding of a learning organisation. To this end I shall look how the WCEDs service provision model reflect their understanding of a learning organisation and whether it is in accordance with what the literature perceive a learning organisation to be. If the WCEDs understanding of learning organisation is not in line with what literature perceives it to be, the idea is to highlight the conceptual inadequacies. The reason for this analysis is because a flawed perception of a learning organisation may result in inadequate interventions.

This inquiry into schools as learning organisations will be conducted largely within a conceptual framework to be outlined below. In dealing with this theoretical framework, I shall draw on two approaches, namely critical theory and hermeneutics, which form the basis of the research methodology for this inquiry. I shall attempt to explicate these two theories and their relevance in this dissertation. I shall then conflate these two theories to clarify the characteristics and dynamics of a learning organisation.

Through the production of empirical and conceptual data I aim to present an understanding of how the service provision policies contribute towards the WCEDs objective to develop schools into learning organisations. These service provision policies will be analysed against the interview finding that I hope to conduct in EMDCs in the Western Cape. There are eight EMDCs in the Western Cape, but for the purpose of this study I shall focus on only three centres: Mitchell's Plain, Metropole North and Worcester, thus focusing on both urban and rural schools. The reason for focusing on these three EMDCs is to make this inquiry manageable, yet at the same time reflect on former disadvantaged areas. The reason for focussing on former disadvantage schools, is because the most if not all former disadvantage schools operate under challenging conditions and the focus will mainly be on assisting those schools to develop optimally. In the following sections I construct the scope of my study and the research procedures followed by the research method and methodology.

1.3 SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of this study is to ascertain what kind of service provision model the WCED is using, and whether its service provision model is adequate to contribute towards schools in the Western Cape becoming learning organisations. This will involve:

- Analysing the organic structure of a learning organisation and determining which factors contribute to creating learning organisations;
- Determining what achievements the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has attained in terms of its envisaged goals and whether this achievement is sufficient to contribute to schools becoming learning organisations;
- Arguing that the idea of a learning organisation is worth pursuing;
- Constructing appropriate constitutive meanings that support the development of a learning organisation and comparing it with the WCED's service-provision policies; and
- Focusing on how the WCED's service-provision policies contribute or impede the development of schools into learning organisations.

I shall undertake a literature review that focuses specifically on the culture and characteristics of a learning organisation. I then look into factors that contribute towards and/or impede the development of a learning organisation. Furthermore, I investigate possible conceptual flaws of a learning organisation and whether it is worth pursuing the idea of a learning organisation. Through the literature I will construct constitutive meanings that I feel best describe the practice of a learning organisation. I then compare the WCED's service-provision policies with the constitutive meanings to ascertain their compatibility.

This will give me an idea of whether the WCED and EMDC's differentiate their functions so that they may address the context specific nature of learning organisations. In addition, I shall focus on how schools integrate their differentiated functions around the interdependencies induced by the key requirements of becoming

learning organisations. The roles and processes involve in-depth analysis, especially where all three tiers need to co-operate with one another.

I shall pay specific attention to the WCEDs service provision model and how this model contributes towards schools becoming learning organisations. The inquiry is conducted against the background of a need that exists for more extensive goal congruence between the three tiers in the WCED and the belief that such a goal could result in enhanced service provision performance. In essence, the objective of this inquiry is to understand what is happening in the schools within the Western Cape with respect to their objective to develop into learning organisations. I shall conduct an inquiry of this nature by constructing, processing and analysis of data through conceptual analysis.

It is often assumed that people in authority are experts, and that their counsel is worth pursuing. This critical hermeneutical inquiry assumes that authority should also be subjected to rational reformulation. Mueller-Vollmer (1994:263) states that authority, “properly understood has nothing to do with blind obedience to a command”. People in authority and power should use discretion when exercising their judgment and this judgment should be subjected to scrutiny.

Authority should not take precedence over one’s own judgment; otherwise authority becomes a source of prejudice. Authority should also take cognisance of knowledge, regardless of the rank or level in which it may exist. That means that if another person displays better judgment and insight than the one in authority, then that judgment should take precedence. It is for this reason that I will subject the WCEDs service provision model to scrutiny.

If an organisation is really to develop, then the people within that organisation also should be open to change. This may even mean developing students, parents and governing bodies, with their professional teachers and managers, in response to evolving needs. In short, as Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991:14) state, “managing change involve[s] changing management”. Therefore development requires effective communication between all education stakeholders. It is in this vein that I shall

investigate to what extent the WCED has developed their service provision model to schools and whether this development is impacting positively on classroom practice.

The most important action that the WCED and EMDCs can undertake is to create a climate of conducive for teaching and learning. Such a climate, however, can best be generated by creating a partnership between EMDCs, the WCED and schools in the region. Such partnership and collaboration (good working relationship between the WCED, EMDCs and schools) must be based on clear vision and purpose, trust and support, clear accountability for results and stewardship of resources in line with the WCEDs purpose for service excellence. If such partnership does not exist developing schools into learning organisation would become a contentious matter.

Any developmental process has to take into account the organisational culture, politics and socio-economic setup for which it is intended. People vary widely, tending to be unpredictable and likely to respond to change in different ways. Developing schools into learning organisations is a developmental and lengthy process involving several consistent interventions. The WCED also has to change its role from that of being a prescriptive structure to that of becoming a supportive service provider. Ambiguities may arise as conditions change within schools and EMDCs, and when new initiatives are undertaken.

Moloi (2005) claims that developing a learning organisation takes place at four levels namely individual, team, organisational and societal level. I shall expand on all four levels especially on how schools, especially at classroom level, benefit from the intervention of EMDCs, especially in the light of Dimmock's (1995:17) argument that "the challenges of the 21st century requires a focus on the classroom level." This implies that the WCEDs service provision model should be aimed at improving student learning and achievement. I shall explore whether the WCEDs service provision model has taken adequate account of student learning and whether student learning is being adequately addressed. This exploration answer the bigger question of whether the WCEDs service provision model is sufficient to assist schools in developing into learning organisations. This will be done by analysing the WCEDs service provision policies and interview that I will conduct with educational practitioners WCEDs officials.

In the preliminary literature review I noted some important points with regards to learning organisations that I will expand on throughout this inquiry. These points are:

A learning organisation uses every opportunity to learn and also makes it easy for all its staff members to learn in any situation. Learning thus takes place throughout the organisation and is not confined to a specialised group. A learning organisation is a place where dynamic learning takes place with learners and educators and where there is a constant reflection on what practices' works and what should be replaced. In Chapter Two I shall expand on the dynamics of a learning organisation and explore ways that best contribute to the development of this. I shall also highlight some possible factors that may stifle the development of a learning organisation.

Turning schools into learning organisations requires a collaborative approach from educators, the WCED, EMDCs and parents. Since learning organisations are context-specific, I argue that the WCED alone cannot determine how schools should become learning organisations, but they can offer their support and advice. Schools are dynamic entities within themselves, and have to constantly adjust to the changing environment. This environment is especially volatile with former disadvantage schools with its high prevalence of crime, drug abuse and sexual promiscuous behaviour while at the same time having to deal with school administration and management changes. All these role players should be interconnected in many ways and should work collaboratively to empower educators and schools to deal with this changing environment. Therefore any attempt to exclude any one of these role players could hinder or stifle the establishment of a learning organisation.

In the next section I shall give a brief exposition of what constitutes a learning organisation. I shall use the literature to explain the concept of a learning organisation and how to track the development of learning organisations.

1.4 SCHOOLS AS LEARNING ORGANISATIONS

I shall conduct a literature review that is aimed at systematically relating the conceptualisation of a learning organisation and the WCED service provision model to the findings of how schools operate in practice in the Western Cape. I shall look at critical issues with regards to provincial educational service provision and ascertain whether better support provision alone is sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations as intended by the WCED. Yet it is also important to realise that constructing data, no matter how credible, does not amount to much without the creative use of a methodical and organised approach.

In offering a general description of a learning organisation, Mloi (2005:2) draws on others researchers who describe a learning organisation “as an organisation that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future and achieve what it truly desires.” This capacity would enable learning organisations to creatively respond to the challenges of their environment. It is the WCEDs perception that learning organisations would provide quality education. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991:3) argue that “the purpose for development planning is to improve the quality of teaching and learning ... through the successful management of innovation and change.” In their endeavour to provide quality education, the WCED aims to develop schools into learning organisations. In the WCED report, Project 1 (2000a:8), the WCED expressed its aim to develop all schools into learning organisations, stating that a learning organisation is “a place of excellence, ever reflecting on itself, its values, aims, processes and structures”. How the WCED and EMDC management perceive their role in contributing towards schools becoming learning organisations and how they intend to develop schools into learning organisations are the focal points of this investigation.

Dalin (1998:181) points out that “each school must implement and institutionalise its own development.” This refers to the first level of development namely individual development. It is at this level that educators start to develop their own “technical, professional and interpersonal” skills to be able to successfully engage the following

levels. (Moloi 2005:21). A mastery of this level would enable successful integration with his/her team, organisation and eventually the society. On the other hand, an omission of this important level could effectively derail or stifle the process of developing schools into learning organisations. It also indicates that developing schools into learning organisations requires more than just material support in service provision, but an initiative from school educators themselves. Schools are dynamic within themselves there are also other external features that shape schools into becoming learning organisations. These features as previously mentioned include the day to day running of schools, the WCEDs policy and service provision interventions parents and the community. It is therefore not only up to the WCED or EMCDs to develop schools into learning organisations, but they certainly can play a significant role in assisting schools to become learning organisations. For schools to develop into learning organisations, they need more than just remedial external intervention such as service provision and support. Schools are organic organisations and have to develop from within. This means schools must have the desire and motivation to become learning organisation and therefore most of the effort should come from within schools.

Dalin (1998:181) concurs by stating that “the school is the unit of change...that all schools must develop from within.” You might have service providers, improving in terms of material proliferation and provide better assistance in terms of provision. However, better material provision will not necessarily ensure that schools become learning organisations. However, schools as organic organisations; does not necessarily imply that the constant changes within mean that school can or should function independently from the WCED. On the contrary, as indicated earlier development should take place on four levels for schools to successfully integrate into learning organisations. Also, most schools in the Western Cape operate within an economic environment and depend heavily on the WCED as the main service provider.

It is therefore the harmonious and interdependent relationship between schools, EMDCs, parents, the communities they operate in and the WCED that will create the necessary conditions that will assist schools in developing into learning organisations. It is therefore the intention of this inquiry to link the title of this dissertation to the

question of whether the WCEDs service provision model is sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations.

Furthermore, Stoll and Fink (2003:11) state that schools are part of a larger society and are interconnected with society rather “than a sum of its part.” This relates to systems thinking and implies that we have to look at schools in a societal context to be able to develop them constructively. The collective engagement of all role-players makes schools a dynamic unit. In systems thinking it means assessing the needs of schools and society as a whole and understanding how the needs of society relate to schools. Stoll & Fink (2003:11) further conclude that the way to change schools into learning organisations means having to “look at schools and their context as ecosystems”. Schools should thus be seen as an interrelated part that functions interdependently with its parents, WCED and the community to achieve its objectives. This further means that schools cannot exist without them and are dependent on all three groups for successful and sustainable development. For sustainable development to happen continual dialogue must prevail.

The refocusing on developing schools as a core objective will demand a great deal from all role players concerned, especially when taking into account the current dysfunctionality of many Western Cape schools as well as the budgetary constraints that are common in all education systems. Focusing on better service provision is a positive step in developing schools into learning organisations. However, such an endeavour would require synergy between schools, EMDCs and Head Office, and creating an enabling environment for quality teaching and learning.

From this preliminary discussion Moloi (2005), Dalin (1998) and Stoll & Fink (2003) I deduce that a learning organisation is an organisation that facilitates proactive change in a collaborative environment with all relevant stakeholders in the school and the community at large in an attempt to facilitate optimal learning. In conclusion, therefore, the aspects that constitute a learning organisation include quality teaching and learning, with collaborative teamwork from all stakeholders.

1.5 RESEARCH PROCEDURES

In this section I shall discuss research methodology and what research methods I deem appropriate for this inquiry. As a former teacher who served the WCED for 12 years, I always had a keen interest in educational development. Schools have a moral obligation toward the community they serve; therefore development should be an ongoing process so that schools can fulfil their purpose of preparing young people to take up their responsibilities in their respective communities. In order for this to materialise, the WCED as the official service provider needs to provide the kind of support which will enable schools to become learning organisations.

This is a philosophical inquiry aimed at questioning and understanding why the WCED chosen a particular service provision model and how it can contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. Burbules and Warnick (2003:24) posit that philosophy entails “Questioning a particular educational practice or policy. This may include an examination of curricular programs, classroom practices, funding procedures, education laws etc., from an ethical, political, epistemological, or metaphysical perspective. The point of the examination may be to find what normative implications these practices entail, for example, or possibly to suggest alternative practices.” This dissertation primarily examines the WCED’s educational service provision model to ascertain whether this service delivery model is up to the task of developing schools into learning organisations, and where necessary it suggests alternative practices.

I shall examine the WCED service provision policy documents pertaining to service delivery to schools in the Western Capes and see how they relate to their objectives of developing schools into learning organisations. In addition, I shall examine and highlight the compatibility of the WCEDs service provision model with where schools are currently and what they hope schools will become. I shall do this in the light of the WCED Report 1, Annexure B (2000b:2). Project 1 defines the purpose of the Head Office as “to ensure qualitative and quantitative accountability in the education planning, development, delivery and corporate system”.

1.5.1 Research question

The research question for this inquiry is:

Is the service provision agenda of the WCED sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations?

This question initiates the critical hermeneutical inquiry into schools as learning organisations. This study will be conducted within an interpretive paradigm, where the central aim is to investigate whether the service provision approach of the WCED and eventually EMDCs is sufficient to contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. In doing this, I shall explore the concept of a learning organisation in the existing literature. Hughes (2000:4) refers to a learning organisation as a place where “there should be a coherent strategy of continuous organisational change.” Hughes further draws on Argyris and Schon (1998), who refer to learning organisation as “deutero learning”. Deutero learning refers to an organisation’s ability to pre-empt changes in the external environment and to learn how to learn. This means that learning organisations are constantly informed about new developments and consistently build the capacity to easily adapt to changes in the external environment.

Here I need to state that the WCED is the learning organisation as well as schools who form the micro unit within the WCED. As such all stakeholders in the WCED which include educators, managers, administrators and policy-makers learn to develop on an individual, team organisational and societal level. At present, some of the units (schools) within the organisation is weak and needs development. Therefore schools are the unit of analysis in this dissertation.

I shall attempt to establish whether Circuit teams and multifunctional teams within EMDCs are indeed providing the increased coordinated and holistic support service to schools as intended by their establishment. If such is the case, the intention is to analyse whether this improved service provision is sufficient to turn schools into learning organisations. However, if such is not the case, the intention is to ascertain

which factors have hindered them from providing such a service. I shall also explore what constitute a learning organisation (their nature, and organic structure) and what can assist schools to become learning organisations.

Swanson (1995:38) believes that the development of the educational system requires the simultaneous development of multiple reform efforts, implying that the effective use of human and natural resources should form the basis of further development. Whitaker and Moses (1994:50) assert: “A high-quality organisation constantly seeks ways to reduce waste and better utilise fiscal, human and technological resources.” This means that identifying the appropriate manpower and service delivery model and assessing the needs of schools are central to securing effective and efficient service delivery.

Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991:17) contend that “the ultimate goal of development and change is an improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.” What may also contribute to schools becoming learning organisations is to ascertain whether there is an improvement of quality teaching in classroom level. I agree that for quality teaching and learning to materialise, the focus of development should be on developing the capacity of teachers especially on classroom teaching. The WCED embarked on a developmental programme aimed at improving the service delivery model and bringing schools closer to Head Office. This initiative implies that schools as units within the WCED has not all been closely monitored as they should have been. As a result the WCED is now hoping to provide better and a more coordinated service in an attempt to assist schools becoming learning organisations. Ascertaining whether schools are indeed closer to Head Office and whether this improved service delivery model was beneficial to local schools and the children in class has a significant link with the overall aim of whether the service provision model is sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations. My contention is that the ultimate beneficiaries of effective and efficient service delivery should be the learners and teachers themselves.

My research question therefore aims to provide a framework for analysing the outcome of this inquiry and will pave the way for how this investigation will be structured.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research inquiry is located in qualitative research methodology. Waghid (2002:42) identifies a few of these types of inquiries, namely positivist, interpretive and critical inquiry. However, methodology goes beyond a mere set of methods; rather it refers to the “rationale and the philosophical assumptions that underlie a particular study.” Most research has its specific methods, which is supported by methodologies, i.e. the rationale that supports the method’s validity. The methodological approaches in this dissertation include hermeneutics and critical theory. These approaches will enable me to “study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:4). Methodology refers to the choices we make with regards to theories in use to investigate a particular matter.

Babbie *et al.* (2001: 104) refer to research methodology as the interface between methodical practice, substantive theory and epistemological underpinning. Epistemology refers to the presuppositions about the nature of knowledge and of science that inform practical inquiry. Methodology is thus the point at which practice, theory and epistemology coalesce in an overt way in the process of directly investigating specific instances within the social world. Methodology, in grounding inquiry in empirical instances, thus makes explicit the presuppositions that inform the knowledge that is generated by the enquiry (Harvey 1990:1-2). I regard methodology as a philosophical framework, a theory or a paradigm.

Young (1990:16) refers to a paradigm as a configuration of elements and practices which define an inquiry: metaphysical presuppositions, uninterrogated terminology, characteristic questions, lines of reasoning, specific theories and their typical scope and mode of application. A paradigm determines how a problem is formulated and tackled methodologically. Depending upon the objective of a particular research project, emphasis is laid more on one paradigm than another.

My research methodology is located in the Philosophy of Education and focuses on an inquiry into schools as learning organisations. In doing so I am also focusing on the

WCED's service provision model to schools to ascertain whether this service provision model is sufficient to turn schools into learning organisations. As a former teacher I have experienced many new policies and interventions from the WCED in terms of changes with regards to curriculum, administration and teaching. All these changes were aimed at improving teaching and learning. However, many of these policies were constructed without proper consultation with teachers. As I became an active participant in these changes, I realised that undertaking research in this field could equip me with analytical tools that will enable me to make a meaningful contribution to the WCED's educational service provision.

To conduct effective and efficient research requires a thorough understanding of methodology. Effectiveness refers to how successfully you are meeting the required procedures to conduct your investigation, while efficiency refers to the relative ease with which you apply these procedures.

Methodology can also be understood as a group of methods, rules and postulates used for a particular research inquiry. As you journey through your research, you are required to choose from a variety of methods and models of research methodology that will help you to best achieve your objectives. Waghid (2002:42) postulates that methodologies and paradigms involve practices of educational research; therefore research methodology concerns itself with "thinking about and producing knowledge and knowledge constructs".

An understanding of the approaches in use in conducting an inquiry is of the utmost importance. The objective of this inquiry is to uncover who the beneficiaries of the change process in the WCED are and to find out, as Kincheloe and McLaren (2005:308) put it, "the processes by which such power plays operate". The core purpose of this inquiry remains to critically analyse and evaluate the WCED's current service provision model to schools and how it relates to classroom practice. This in turn may lead to an emancipatory understanding of the WCEDs service provision model in relation to a learning organisation. Furthermore, the research is intended to find out if this improved service provision model is sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations.

This inquiry is deeply grounded in interpretive research. The reason for using this methodology is because interpretive research can offer a meaningful explanation and justification for how and why the WCED has adopted a specific service delivery approach to improve service delivery in the Western Cape. This research methodology can also possibly identify realistic alternatives to certain prevailing perceptions or gaps.

This methodological approach in itself indicates my motivation for using a particular approach for conducting an inquiry. When conducting an inquiry you should ask yourself some fundamental questions like what is the best way to conduct an investigation. A very good understanding of the purpose of your investigation will ultimately determine the sort of method that will be appropriate to an investigation. The validity of one's findings depends on the soundness of the research methodology that you have use.

In support of my explanation I present the following analogy. Suppose your health has been compromised and you want to follow a health recovery programme. Before you start, you should know what you want to recover from and which health plan will suite your particular need. If you know the health plan, then you do not need any advice. However, if you have no knowledge of an appropriate health plan, you have to consult medical advice. Suppose there are more than one health plan that you could follow. That will compound your problem because now you need to find out the most effective and efficient plan. Now you need to decide which plan to follow.

Similarly, the research procedure is like a health recovery program that you wish to undertake. As with you health recovery program, for a research program there are also important decisions that you have to take. The first is to decide what you want to find out about, in other words what research questions you want to answer. Having done that, you now have to seek ways of finding answers to those questions. The path of finding answers to your questions constitutes research methodology. Therefore, a thorough understanding on research methodology is crucial.

1.6.1 Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is derived from the Greek word (*hermeneuein*) which means interpret. The interpretive nature of hermeneutics makes it a complex phenomenon. Complex, because it requires understanding of meaning which depends on understanding the context in which the situation occurs. This methodology dovetails with the analyses of a learning organisation that is also context-specific. The etymology of hermeneutics can be traced from Heidegger's theological development of the concept based in a concern with exegesis. Exegesis involves an extensive and critical interpretation of a biblical text. Birch (1993:238) considers hermeneutics as "the art or science of interpretation especially Scripture."

Hermeneutics implies that the text under investigation is not easy to understand and needs clear and constructive interpretation to make its "significance" clear. Hermeneutics can therefore be understood as the theory and practice of interpretation. Birch (1993:238) contends that hermeneuticists focus on a particular audience and concentrate mainly on "the act of explaining the significance of a text" so that it becomes clearer for that particular audience.

The concept of hermeneutics has three meanings: to make something explicit (to express), to unfold (to explain) and to translate (to interpret) (Danner 1995:223). The main objective of this dissertation is indeed (i) to express stakeholders' views of current practice in relation to what is hope to be achieved; (ii) explain what a learning organisation entails; and finally (iii) to interpret the contribution of service delivery policies to schools becoming learning organisations.

Hermeneutics evolved from Schleiermacher to Gadamer and beyond. To enable philosophers to denote the study of interpretation, they later adopted the concept hermeneutics. Schleiermacher, a German Protestant theologian and philologist, has been acknowledged as the founder of modern hermeneutics. He has taken the concept of hermeneutics beyond the scope of interpreting biblical texts to the illumination of human understanding. Hermeneutics is now commonly adopted for the development and study of theories and the interpretation and understanding of texts. The basic aim of hermeneutics is to clarify the meaning of the written texts. However,

Schleiermacher's theoretical understanding also includes the interpretation of oral communication.

This then brings me to the issue of rhetoric. Schleiermacher contends that rhetoric and hermeneutics belong together because both require linguistic competence, even though they may use it in different ways. Bowell and Kemp (2002:50) define rhetoric as "any verbal or written attempt to persuade someone to believe desire or do something that does not attempt to give good reason for the belief, desire or action, but attempts to motivate that belief, desire or action solely through the power of the words used." Some speakers have the ability to capture their audience with their dynamic and persuasive speech and take them to the level of emotional intoxication. It is while in this state of intoxication that those listeners usually cannot engage in critical examination.

Rhetoric involves manipulation and coercion and should be avoided. It is for this reason that the art of hermeneutics is useful to authenticate the truth. To accept something as truth, the reader or interpreter has to search deeply and from different angles into the linguistic fabric of a text in order to have a clearer understanding of any ideological distortions that may exist. Philosophical hermeneutics argues that understanding is not a procedure, nor does it prescribe a set of rules that governs understanding, but rather "is a condition of human beings" (Waghid *et al.* 2005:87).

Gadamer (1977:24) also acknowledges the connection between hermeneutics and rhetoric by claiming that hermeneutics was largely borrowed from rhetoric. Hermeneutics and rhetoric are therefore intricately linked. Knowledge is constructed through dialogue and meaning becomes clear through dialogue between the text and the researcher. Hermeneutics has developed progressively since its inception into philosophy. Wilhelm Dilthey formulated the idea of general hermeneutics which intended to use method as a means to understand human expression.

It was later called methodological hermeneutics which "focused on understanding authors' intention rather than the truth of texts"; with correct interpretation still as a primary factor (Guignon 2002:263). This concept of methodological hermeneutics

was challenged by Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer, for reasons I shall explain below.

Later the focus shifted from epistemological concerns, which concentrated on the proper method for interpreting human interaction, to ontological hermeneutics, based on understanding the interpreter (Guignon 2002:265). This dissertation draws on both the epistemological dimension, with its emphasis on gaining knowledge on a learning organisation and how it is developed, and the ontological dimension, with its focus on how service delivery provision promotes or impedes the development of learning organisations.

Hermeneutics has a rehabilitative approach and is aimed at moving towards a more humane and subjective approach to research. The whole educational experience is based on understanding and interpretation. Therefore, in education we have to understand and interpret all the time. This makes the whole educational experience in itself is a hermeneutical phenomenon. Our engagement with each other and the world is based mainly on our perceptions, rather than merely the objective features of a given situation. Outhwaite (1975:20) contends that “Interpretation is an act involving the ‘construction of something finite and determinate from what is infinite and indeterminate’.”

We all have a certain understanding of things, however skew our understanding may be. Hermeneutics attempts to alter our understanding and reveals a new way of thinking. Dilthey extended the scope of hermeneutics beyond the individual to include cultural systems and organisations. Hence, when systems and organisation are involved, this makes hermeneutics a social phenomenon.

The underlying principle of hermeneutics implies that “we should to try understanding everything that can be understood” (Gadamer 1977:31). To authenticate interpretation, Gallagher (1997:136) draws on Hirsch’s point that “interpreters-researchers must follow a set of procedural rules that allow for the establishment of relative probabilities with respect to the correctness of interpretation.”

Hermeneutics is a progressive discipline that has developed into a collection of systems as methodologies of interpretation suitable not only for religion and humanism, but also for the social sciences. The system of hermeneutics includes romanticist hermeneutics, phenomenological hermeneutics, dialectical hermeneutics, critical hermeneutics and post-structural hermeneutics. This list is not exhaustive. I will not explore all systems, but only those I consider to be suitable for this enquiry.

There is already a shared understanding that exists between people, and that this sharing occurs through language. This view reflects on the Gadamerian metaphor of “fusion of horizons”, whereby different interpretations of the phenomenon under investigation (in this case how learning organisations are developed) are brought together through dialogue to produce shared understanding. In this dissertation I shall use hermeneutics as a credible and rigorous strategy to create an awareness of the nature of a learning organisation and to explore ways to meaningfully contribute toward the establishment of learning organisations.

1.6.1.1 Conceptual inadequacies within hermeneutics

Critical hermeneutics is a combination of critical theory and interpretivism. You are combining interpretation, which is the exploration of meaning, with an empowering interest, an emancipatory and liberatory interest. In his exploration of validity in interpretation, Hirsch (1975) critiques Gadamer’s version of hermeneutics, as explained in the book *Truth and Method*. Gadamer opposes the concept of method (as understood in the positive sciences) stating that method has no role to play in the humanities. Madison (1990:26) draws on Hirsch’s logical positivistic argument that there is or should be no significant difference between the empirical sciences and the humanities, and that the hypothetical deductive method as advocated by the positivist philosophers of science is as applicable in the matter of literary textual interpretation as it is in the physical sciences.

Hirsch contends that Gadamer’s position increases arbitrariness and therefore reduces the crucial role of the interpreter, while at the same time failing to reveal the natural ability of the interpreter. This conflict, Madison (1990:26) believes, gives rise to “two irreconcilably different theories of understanding and interpretation” namely

positivistic hermeneutics and phenomenological hermeneutics. For the sake of clarity, I shall give a brief explanation of both theories.

Phenomenological hermeneutics assumes that in order to interpret the object (text or the thing being interpreted) completely, a proper context, or mental frame, is needed. This context cannot be found in the extraneous historical and cultural context, but rather that the text affects its own mental frame. Therefore, according to phenomenological hermeneutics, to interpret a text means to exclude all extraneous variables and allow the text to communicate its meaning. The aim of phenomenological hermeneutics therefore is to articulate the truth as it is presented in the text. The underlying assumption of phenomenological hermeneutics is that the reader does not interpret the text, but that interpretation is revealed by the text.

This hermeneutic system lacks rigorous textual, historical and cultural methodologies. Positivist hermeneutics, on the other hand, “assumes that we only know about something if we can apprehend it through our senses and explain what causes it” (Harvey 2007:13). It appears that this approach operates on a more scientific level and focuses mainly on explaining how the world operates.

While Madison (1990:26) refutes Hirsch’s criticism of phenomenological hermeneutics as well as his version of hermeneutics he nonetheless contends that Hirsch’s criticism of the Gadamerian phenomenological version of hermeneutics must be taken seriously. This is because he believes that Hirsch’s criticism has the potential to point out that phenomenological hermeneutics “does not afford the license for arbitrariness and does in fact provide for methodological rigor in interpretation.” If this can be accepted, Madison (1990:26) contends, then phenomenological hermeneutics can be “positively argued and defended.”

1.6.1.2 The Habermas-Gadamer debate

Gadamer believes that prejudice does play a part in the process of understanding a literary text or a historical event. He is of the opinion that there will always be an element of judgment in any inquiry or event and that you can never detached yourself from these prejudices. In his view, authority and reason are not opposing elements but

complementary elements of understanding. Gadamer dislikes modern technological reasoning, where the subject uses method to control and manipulate the object in order to gain understanding. Instead, Gadamer favours a dialectical approach to interpretation, which he considers to be the direct opposite to scientific method. Dialectical knowledge cannot be acquired through method, but requires participation from the subject.

Gadamer acknowledges that pre-contextual knowledge is necessary to begin the process of understanding through interpretation. For example, the concept of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) will only become significant in as far as we understand apartheid, equity, redress or democracy within the South African context. It is in this vein that Gadamer constructs his theory of historical hermeneutics. The essence of the debate is Gadamer's acceptance of the historicity of consciousness and Habermas's rejection of Gadamer's claim that understanding and interpretation belongs to the authority of tradition. Habermas developed critical theory which he claims can lead to an emancipatory understanding of a matter. This theory aims to expose distortions within inter-subjective communication that alienates people from themselves and their past.

Gadamer posits that language and symbol are the media of human existence and form a significant part of human experience. He believes that reality is created through language. Habermas repudiates this notion. He believes that labour and domination plays an equally important part in constructing our reality. Unlike Gadamer's idealistic notion of language, Habermas views language as the bearer of cultural tradition; it is the medium of inter-subjective communication, a tool of domination and power among people and a means with which to enforce inequality.

Mueller-Vollmer (1994:256) draws on Gadamer's belief that "no understanding would be possible if the interpreter were not also part of the historical continuum which he and the phenomenon he studies must share." Therefore to gain a proper interpretation, according to Gadamer, requires that the interpreter must have a historical consciousness.

Habermas finds Gadamer's unwillingness to theorise on hermeneutic methodology strange. Gadamer, on the other hand, contends that putting the emphasis on method presupposes that knowledge already exists about the subject who is supposed to be interpreted and understood. Gadamer claims that epistemology and methodology are "filled with questionable ontological assumptions that can distort our view of what actually goes on in trying to understand human expressions" (Guignon 2002:265). This in turn creates a gap between subject and object which eventually causes an epistemological confusion about our knowledge of the "object in the external world". This further creates an unbridgeable gap between the interpreter and textual meaning, which makes the project of interpretation deeply problematic.

Habermas further accuses Gadamer of adding insignificant positivistic ideas on hermeneutics and justifying this use information. Habermas believes that hermeneutics can overcome prejudices through critical and self-reflective methodology. Scheiermacher also rejects the notion that the interpreter should be outside of history.

One of the main criticisms against Gadamer is the understanding that every dialogue between a subject and an object, or between two subjects, is a genuine and authentic dialogue. One common point between Habermas and Gadamer is that both agree that there are no final answers to the complex questions in our world and that the interpretation of human behaviour is an ongoing debate.

It is not uncommon for people to say something but behave in an opposite way. This situation could be the result of many reasons and context. For instance, a person may defend a particular cause of action because of certain obligations, loyalty, manipulation or indoctrination or simply because of hypocrisy.

The use of critical theory and hermeneutics as a methodological tool will not only enhance our understanding and give us an emancipatory view of the WCED's service provision model, but also provide a framework for understanding the relevance of this service provision model to the WCED's objective to develop schools into learning organisations.

1.6.2 Critical theory

Contemporary critical theory is deeply rooted in the work of Jürgen Habermas and is therefore also related to the Frankfurt School. Swann and Pratt (2003:197) draw on Habermas's three interdependent ways to conduct scientific research namely: empirical analysis (that deals with prediction and control), historical hermeneutics (concerned with understanding) and critical theory (based on emancipation). Critical theory, according to Carr and Kemmis (1986:144), is the result of a series of critiques engaged in by individuals or groups to "expose contradictions in the rationality or the justice of social actions".

However, for critical thinking to be relevant it must, as Bailin and Siegel (2003:181) put it, "meets relevant standards or criteria of acceptability." This, as Chambers (2004) alludes, means not being part of party politics, but being able to voice your opinion on current events, proposed reform agendas appraise or criticise political decisions. This then results in "interpretation of social life created by individuals or groups" (Chambers 1986:144). In order to make this interpretation acceptable obviously requires evaluative, analytical and logical engagement with social behaviour. This in turn involves reasoning and critical judgment.

Lipman (1991:19) argues that "making moral judgments is not an end in itself; it is a means for improving the quality of life." I shall briefly explore the concept of judgment. Lipman (2003:210) connects judgment with wisdom by referring to wisdom as "intelligent judgment" or "good judgment" or judgment that has emanated from experience. When you arrive at a decision, form an opinion or simply come to a conclusion, you have applied judgment. He (2003:210) argues that "every outcome of inquiry is a judgment." The connection Lipman concludes is that judgment is a descendant of wisdom which in turn is a "chief characteristic of critical theory" (Lipman 2003:210).

Waghid (2001:45) draws on Carr (1983), Giroux (1983), and Aronowitz and Giroux (1992), who contend that critical theory has an "emancipatory interest". This implies that critical theory should enable us to learn to see our world and us in good new ways. These ways include values, judgments and the interests of humanity. A good

understanding of these ways will influence the way we educate our children as both parents and teachers. Chambers (2004:221) posits that “Critical Theory has a normative agenda. Its stated interest is the emancipation of humanity from injustice.”

Critical theory attempts to uncover the causes of distortion and create new ways of thinking, and affects the way we respond to those we do not agree with on social, religious and political issues, and how we recognise and deal with our own motives, fears and desires. How (1995:13) posits that critical theory seeks to uncover the relationship between ideas and their social and political environment. Horkheimer (1990:244) concurs that a theory is critical only if it has an emancipatory approach “to liberate the human being from the circumstances that enslave them.” Critical theory is social theory geared toward critiquing and changing established ways of thinking and established forms of social life, in contrast to traditional “positivist and interpretive” theories oriented only towards understanding and explaining it (Waghid 2001:54).

Once you have a clearer understanding of the aforementioned elements, it should be carefully integrated “into a framework of thought which could provide a new and justifiable approach to social science” (Carr & Kemmis 1986:132). Consequently you end up with what Roderick (1986:7) calls a “practical intent.” This practicality involves questioning, making judgments, evaluating, looking for connections and categorising. This means active engagement, while at the same time being open to other points of view before making decisions.

It should be noted, however, that it is not uncommon for an individual’s aim and purpose to be distorted or repressed. Critical social theory attempts to alert individuals to when and how this happens, and it offers ways to eliminate such distortion or repression so that, as Carr and Kemmis (1986:136) put it, “the rational pursuit of their goals can be undertaken.” This idea calls for a critical engagements and encourages individuals to take action in replacing distorted practices with less distorted practices. Any investigation that makes use of critical theory must address injustice within society and thus become confrontational and transformative.

Blake and Masschelen (2003:38) contend that “critical theory has always attempted to investigate the relationship between the individual and social and cultural

development, and always used a variety of theories and disciplines to develop a framework for understanding.” This implies that through critical theory an individual’s behaviour can be explained through examining their relationship with the environment and culture they find themselves in. It would also enable an examination on how educational role players (especially on school level) feel with regards to the WCEDs service provision model. It should also be noted that in modern society, which is characterised by many technological advances, critical research is becoming more aware of the significant influence of social and historical forces on individuals’ personal and world views (Kincheloe & McLaren 2005:304).

Van Wyk (2004:48) draws on Fay’s (1987) understanding that “critical theory wants to explain a social order in such a way that it becomes itself the catalyst which leads to the transformation of this social order.” In this view, critical theory now becomes “action orientated”, aimed at uncovering harmful and distorted practices, while at the same time displaying its emancipatory and enlightening effect that leads to transformation. Because critical theory aims to explain and transform the conditions that enslave individuals, many critical theories have been developed and are still being developed. Our interpretation of matters cannot be non-theoretical. We may not be aware of the theoretical assumptions that guide our thinking, but they are there nevertheless.

To make sense of human behaviour you have to interpret people’s actions, but to be objective is not possible, in our interpretation, especially if we attempt to take an unprejudiced standpoint outside the action and events. The interpreter will almost inevitably view a situation from a historical point of view. Kincheloe and McLaren (2005:304) confirm this point by “defining a criticalist as a researcher or theorist who attempts to use her or his work as a form of social or cultural criticism and who accepts certain basic assumptions: that all thought is fundamentally mediated by power relations that are social and historically constituted.”

Horkheimer (1993:21) claims that critical theory can only be adequate if it includes “explanatory, practical and normative” practices. It must explain problematic areas in the current social reality, identify the actors to change it and provide both clear norms for criticism and achievable goals for social transformation. He (1993:21) concludes

that critical theory “has as its object human beings as producers of their own historical form of life.” This statement confirms that Critical Theory has significant practical implications. It also fits in well with Guess’s (1981:63) understanding that “a critical theory gives them knowledge of what changes would result if they were to apply the standards of rationality.”

All theories have shortcomings of some sort and critical theory is no exception. Chambers (2004:235) refers to Dryzek, who expresses her regret at critical theory’s “unwillingness to engage in progressive and genuinely emancipatory politics.” She further contends that “others on the Left argue that Harbermas’s political philosophy is so optimistic in its emancipatory vision that it bypasses, displaces, or transcends politics altogether.”

In this section I have dealt with critical hermeneutics as a methodological tool to understand the concept and development of a learning organisation. I used this methodology because of its potential to contribute to my investigation of the WCED’s understanding of a learning organisation and their service delivery model in relation to their understanding of a learning organisation. This methodology may provide an emancipatory outcome with respect to the way we ought to understand and develop schools into learning organisations.

1.6.3 Critical Hermeneutics

Critical hermeneutics draws on two paradigms of research, namely hermeneutics as a basis for understanding, and critical theory, which introduces a critical element even to my own interpretation. This will enable me not only to critique what other people may say, but will also allow for critique on my own interpretation. In so doing I will draw on the rich heritage of Critical Theory as espoused by Jürgen Habermas and the Frankfurt School.

Through critical hermeneutics I shall attempt to investigate the service provision model of EMDCs to schools in relation to school policies and the South African Schools Act. This shall be done in a way to bring WCED intentions, policy and the South African Schools Act together within the contextual framework of effective and

efficient service provision, and how the service provision model should relate to schools particular needs. Research methodology involves the skilful interpretive use of specific approaches and methods for collecting and analysing empirical materials (Denzin & Lincoln 2008:641).

Critical hermeneutics further states that “interpretation will never be linguistically unproblematic” (2003:449). This means that when we interpret we essentially use language which is filled with concepts which in turn have to be linked with other concepts to create clarity of thought. Furthermore, proponents of critical hermeneutics contend that a careful investigation into a text can expose the hidden pathology of texts and free them from their ideological distortions. This is where the emancipatory outcomes become clear.

Hirsch, Jr. (1978:76), on the other hand, draws on Schleiermacher’s humanistic predecessors’ idea that a “text which requires fuller interpretation must be explained and determined exclusively from the linguistic domain common to the author and his original public.” In opposition, Bailin (1998:104) draws on Habermas’s contention that “language alone cannot provide the objective structure for social action.” She (1998:105) further concludes that “the technological, economical and political factors always distort language and hence limit the possibility of objectivity in ordinary communication and interpretation.” I contend that contextual understanding has some merits and, in combination with the establishment of meaning, significance and ethical considerations could provide greater clarification of a text, taking cognisance of the contextualisation of a text.

Critical hermeneutics focuses on how people interact within a particular culture and how this interaction shapes their individual behaviour. To understand human behaviour therefore would mean that we need to understand the ideology of people, which is not an easy matter. It is through culture that we learn our identities and those of others. Understanding culture enables us to assign value to human existence, expressions and experience. Therein lays the potential conflict in terms of consensus about common values, expression, norms, commonsense, race, and gender, amongst others.

Society generally produces knowledge. However, this knowledge is often mystified. Through critical hermeneutics one can arrive at an understanding on how certain conditions came into existence and why they continue to exist. The application of critical hermeneutics may also reveal problematic areas within EMDCs that may otherwise have been ignored or overlooked. Denzin (1998:23) argues that “unless these meaning and values are clarified, their effect on subsequent interpretation remain clouded and often misunderstood.” Thus it is this meaning and value within EMDCs that this dissertation hopes to clarify by examining them through the hermeneutical lens.

Critical hermeneutics identifies three domains that are closely related. These include the technical, the practical and the emancipatory interest. Technical human interest uses the empirical-analytic methods of positivism to produce and explain natural sciences. Practical human interest uses hermeneutic methods to understand and explain practical knowledge. Habermas extended hermeneutics a step further by adding a critical dimension to it, thus placing it within an emancipatory domain. To produce an emancipatory outcome one has to use critical theory to achieve emancipatory knowledge. Critical hermeneutics is therefore understood to be a combination of theory, praxis and action. An understanding of this combination could significantly contribute towards clarifying the WCED service provision.

I conflated critical hermeneutics with other methods as an appropriate research methodology because this inquiry deals with the interpretation of how role players in the WCED education sector understand the construct and practice of a learning organisation. I do so in view of Danner’s (1995:223) contention that “when you deal with *human beings* and *human products* we are in a hermeneutic process.” The critical aspect is to add more rigor and reflective reasoning to this study. I argue that learning organisations can be better understood through an interpretive lens and that critical hermeneutics as an interpretive approach can adequately guide my inquiry into schools as learning organisations.

For the purpose of this inquiry I shall use critical hermeneutics as a methodological tool to assist me to understand, evaluate and critique the pragmatics of the WCED transformation process as it has unfolded since 2002 with the introduction of EMDCs

and how this continues to impact on school development. Using a critical hermeneutical approach will give me an awareness of forms of domination and manipulation that may exist and how these “might be overcome in this context and time to obtain greater liberation for more people” (Luke 1991:22).

As a former teacher I have experienced many new policies and interventions from the WCED in terms of changes with regards to curriculum, administration and teaching. All these changes were aimed at improving teaching and learning. However, many of these policies as it filtered down to school level, proved to be irrelevant to some school contexts or misunderstood. Because of the inadequacies of some of these policies, many teachers and principals have left the profession complaining of the declining morale and excessive growth of administration work.

As I became an active participant in these changes, I realised that a research undertaking in this field could equip me with the analytical tools that will enable me to make a meaningful contribution to educational service delivery. I shall expand more on this point in Chapter Two. I argue that learning organisations can be better understood through an interpretive lens, and that critical hermeneutics as a methodological tool that can provide a deeper understanding of how the WCED’s service provision model contributes towards schools becoming learning organisations.

I selected critical hermeneutics as a research methodology because this inquiry deals essentially with the interpretation of how role players in the education sector perceive the construct and practice of a learning organisation and how they engage with it. I will deal with the concept of learning organisation in more detail later. In Chapter Two I shall argue that schools need more than just an improvement of material proliferation to become learning organisations.

I am inclined to support Kincheloe and McLaren (2005:449), who draw on Goodson and Mangan (1996), who are “suspicious of any model of interpretation that claims to reveal the final truth, the essence of a text or any form of experience.” Instead they contend that in a critical hermeneutical context “human experience can never be fully disclosed – neither to the researcher nor even to the human who experienced it”. They believe this is because language cannot adequately explain human behaviour as

language itself has limitations. The South African education system, especially with its controversial issues and variety of cultures, is very fluid and dynamic, and hence understanding this system is a complex matter.

Critical theory has an emancipatory interest and by drawing on this theory, I am not only trying to understand but also to evoke an emancipatory interest within the WCEDs management's to understand that their service delivery approach alone is not sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations. I contend that a critical hermeneutical approach to this investigation will enable me to examine the rationale behind the EMDC perspective on effective and efficient service delivery. Not only will it allow me to draw on two paradigms of research, but will also enable me to put these two paradigms in opposition to each other, in what Gallagher (1997:144) calls "a hermeneutically justified enterprise".

Kincheloe and McLaren (2005:311) draw on the hermeneutic tradition which holds that "in qualitative research there is only interpretation, no matter how vociferously many researchers may argue that the facts speak for themselves." This implies that the way we understand and relate to information is an act of interpretation. We always speak or write in relation to others. Therefore, our selection of methods and ideas reflects the way we interpret our realities. As Kincheloe and McLaren (2005:311) put it: "perception itself is an act of interpretation." Yet at the same time it must be noted that the fundamental aim of critical hermeneutics is to focus on the purposes and procedures of interpretation. The question as put by Krausz (2002) on whether there is a single right interpretation now requires an answer. Margolis (2002:27) concurring with Kincheloe and McLaren (2005) provides the answer by stating that "there is no convincing argument for the one interpretation thesis."

Guignon (2002:264) argues that hermeneutics is the "art or theory of interpretation" Since interpretation is at the heart of hermeneutics, it needs further explication. Hirsch (1978:11) identifies two important concepts when dealing with interpretation, namely "meaning" and "significance". He (1978:79, 80) argues that "meaning is the determinate representation of a text for an interpreter.", whereas "significance is meaning-as-related-to-something-else." Simply put, meaning refers to the verbal meaning of a text whereas significance refers to the textual meaning within its context.

Also important to hermeneutics is the application of method. Madison (1990:27) puts it this way: “correct method is necessary if interpretation is to be a responsible business.” After all, if two or more readers disagree on the meaning of a particular text, it seems fair to assume that a certain method has to be used in order to establish whose interpretation is closer to the truth. So, to eliminate the “conflict of interpretation” we need some methodological criteria to “arbitrate.” In dealing with method, Madison (1990:29, 30) suggests that a list of criteria be used to deal with the actual process of interpretation. These include fundamental principles like coherence, penetration, thoroughness, contextuality, agreement, suggestiveness and potential when interpreting a text. Even though all these are prerequisites for sound interpretation, Madison (1990) concludes that persuasive or practical reasoning should ultimately prevail as the method of interpretation.

This means that theory should serve merely as a guide for what procedures are to be put into practice, but persuasive or practical reasoning should ultimately prevail as the method of interpretation. Madison (1990:31) believes that persuasive reasoning eventually leads to agreement or consensus.

I shall also conduct a conceptual inquiry of what the WCED perceives learning organisations to be and how this perception shapes their service delivery model to turn schools into learning organisations. Having done that, I shall look for conceptual tension that may exist in terms of what constitutes the development of a learning organisation as recorded in literature in relation to how the WCED perceives learning organisations to be. Through a hermeneutical lens, I shall attempt to explain the relationship between what educational management theory on service provision and in terms of what organisations hope to become.

I shall now clarify the link between the Western Cape Education Department (WCED), Educational Management and Development Centres (EMDCs) and Multi-Functional Teams (MFTs). In the foundational phase of the establishment of EMDCs, the overall intention of the WCED was to bring Head Office closer to schools in an attempt to provide more effective and efficient service delivery to schools. Whether schools are receiving more effective and efficient service provision remains to be

assessed, taking into consideration Herman's (2006:42) argument that "it is not even clear whether efficiency in education can be measured at all."

EMDCs provide a range of services to schools through teams of specialists in collaboration with the WCED head office. These services include:

- Curriculum development and support;
- Specialised learner and educator support;
- Institutional management and governance support; and

Administrative services, including institutional development and support for Articles 20 and 21 schools, labour relations assistance, and internal administration services.

Through critical hermeneutics I shall attempt to investigate the intervention of the WCED and EMDCs to schools in relation to service provision policies and the South African Schools Act. This shall be done by way of reconciling the WCED's service delivery model, policy and practice within the contextual framework of effective and efficient service delivery and how these relate to the social understanding of service provision.

Critical hermeneutics is essentially grounded in historical discourses. Therefore interpretation is questionable if it does not take into account the historical context of a text because an historical context forms the backbone of a text. Gadamer also recognises the importance of history for interpretation. He makes the point that if a text is to be understood properly, then it has to be seen in a larger context.

Next I shall summarise the origin of hermeneutics and its relevance to this inquiry. I do this with the understanding that knowledge is a product of a society which is at times confused but through critical reflection the culture of a society can be made clear.

I contend that critical hermeneutics may significantly contribute to this inquiry because it will enable me to investigate the technical and practical implications of WCEDs service provision to schools and whether it is sufficient to assist schools becoming learning organisations. The important questions that will be addressed are whose interests are served by the WCED's course of action and how does their

service provision contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. Ultimately this dissertation aims to bring about an emancipatory understanding of the WCEDs service provision ability to transform schools into learning organisations.

It also aims to stimulate a rational and logical reflection on the WCED service provision and to bring about a critical understanding of whether the EMDCs service provision model meets the relevant standards appropriate for developing learning organisations. Critical hermeneutics will also enable a more proactive engagement and not only passively accepting and following policy as it is handed down from the WCED head office. This engagement includes questioning, evaluating, making judgments, finding connections and categorising. By this I mean that critical hermeneutics may uncover ways the WCED impedes or advances the development of learning organisations in the Western Cape. It may also bring about a new consciousness of what a learning organisation is and how schools can develop into learning organisations.

Furthermore, the post-apartheid democratisation process within the National Department of Education has resulted in the amalgamation of White, Black, Coloured and Indian cultures. Understanding these different cultures is therefore an extremely complex matter. In this regard critical hermeneutics with its basis in understanding and interpretation can play a significant role in understanding and dealing with cultural differences. It can also inform an understanding of how society, specifically in the Western Cape with its competitive environment, can respond to educational transformation and how educational leaders can contribute to the development of schools into learning organisations.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODS

In explaining the concept of method I draw on the work of Lee Harvey (1990). Method refers to the way empirical data are collected and ranges from asking questions, through to reading documents, to observation of both controlled and uncontrolled situations. While some methods lend themselves more readily to certain epistemological perspectives, no method of data collection is inherently positivist, phenomenological or critical (Harvey 1990:1). In other words, method refers to the

procedure or technique used to collect empirical data – for example, the use of interviews as a means to collect data.

It should also be noted that method is more than just the correct application to a subject matter. Applying correct methods does not always constitute appropriate behaviour or good judgment. In dealing with human behaviour means that one has to take cognisance of ethical consideration when applying methods. Madison (1990:29) therefore contends that “one cannot become a good interpreter simply by mastering a certain method.” I therefore contend that when analysing a text, consideration should be given to context which may include culture and historical background.

It could be said that a method is a series of steps to conduct an investigation, while methodology is a codified set of recommended practices. Methods are specific research techniques. Taking into consideration the conceptual differences between method and methodology, they can nevertheless be linked together to serve a common purpose. Conducting research and analysing policy documents are often critical factors, especially to convey a clear message. This study is located in a social sphere, aiming to find out how the WCED’s education service provision model give impetus to school development in the Western Cape. The research methods used in this inquiry of a qualitative nature and are aimed at understanding the service provision model of the WCED and to what extent it supports schools in developing into learning organisations. This means collecting important service provision data from the WCED, EMDCs and schools.

Furthermore, to analyse concepts and terminology that may arise from literature and policy documents that relates to a learning organisation and then to construct constitutive meanings of a learning organisation. This type of activity places this research project in a conceptual framework. For the purpose of this inquiry, I use conceptual analysis and interviews.

The next section discusses the different methods that I will use in this inquiry. These methods will serve as conceptual lenses to shape this investigation. These methods include conceptual analysis, interviews and a literature review.

1.7.1 Conceptual analysis

In this section I shall attempt to give a more detailed understanding of “conceptual analysis.” I shall explore the meaning of “concept” and “analysis” respectively before using it as a tool in my investigation. I shall then explain the relevance of conceptual analysis to this investigation. Birch (1993:1) draws on both the Oxford English Dictionary, which defines a concept as “an idea of a class of objects, a general notion or idea,” and on Webster, which defines it as “an abstract or generic idea generalised from particular instances.”

It is important to clarify concepts because a clear understanding of concepts can lead to better analysis and meaningful conclusion of data. Nachmias and Nachmias (2008:25) advance the idea that “concepts allow us to develop a perspective – a way of looking at empirical phenomena that can be shared with others.” Concepts convey information and describe things or situations. Therefore, understanding a concept may lead to clarity of thought and consistent interpretation. Furthermore, a proper understanding of a situation may further lead to appropriate and relevant intervention.

Hirst and Peters (1998:30) posit that conceptual analysis examines the use of words in order to see what principle or principles govern their use. Furthermore, they claim that “concepts can only be understood in relation to other concepts” (Hirst & Peters 1998:30). Concepts are usually connected to the social life of a group. Subtle differences exist between groups of language users. Even though there are common elements in a concept, there are also different emphases and differences in valuation as, for example, in the case of the concept of ‘education’; conceptual analysis aims to describe concepts of education by using other concepts.

Conceptual analysis does not only involve breaking down or analysing a concept in parts in order to gain knowledge, but may also require interpretation. Thus, it is the study of intersubjective words within a particular environment. This mean that before we even start dissecting a concept, we have to interpret it, and then show its multiple uses, and its meaning and context in order to clarify it.

Conceptual analysis aims to clarify concepts and terminology that are vague and/or ambiguous. In the context of this investigation the WCEDs service provision model is under scrutiny to look for compatibility and ambiguity against its objective to develop schools as learning organisations. It also aims to clarify the types of distinctions that words have been developed to designate. It is for this reason that conceptual analysis forms the basis of sound research. Conceptual analysis also attempts to reveal hidden assumptions that underlie a particular view. In terms of this investigation the idea is to understand why the WCED is using the model of service provision and who are the main beneficiaries of their service provision model. Conceptual analysis also helps to get a better understanding of the similarities and differences that it is possible to find in a word. It is analysis of such nature that will enable me to make deductions in terms of how far the WCED is in obtaining its objective or whether they are on the right path. In view of the above, I shall use conceptual analysis because it may potentially make a valuable contribution towards understanding the WCED's view of a learning organisation and how this view is reflected in their service provision model to schools.

Birch (1993:1) draws on Wittgenstein, a British philosopher who posits that “our idea of what belongs to the realm of reality is given for us in the language that we use.” A clear understanding of language is therefore essential in understanding reality. Furthermore, the concepts that we use reflect our understanding of the world. By doing this, I am merely attempting to clarify their meaning and to show their multiple uses.

Hirst & Peters (1970:8) contend that there are subtle differences between groups of language users as well as common elements in concepts. It can therefore be argued that concepts do not exist in isolation: “Concepts are inseparably connected with the social life of a group.” They can be sometimes be understood properly only in relation to related concepts. Conceptual analyses are often undertaken through reviewing the literature related to the concept under investigation. Through conceptual analysis, I shall attempt to understand and assess educational management's understanding of a learning organisation and what is regarded in the literature as a holistic organisation.

Through conceptual analysis, we can also speculate about connections that have not yet been confirmed through the intervention of research or descriptive studies. As

Burbules and Warnick (2003:20) observe: “An unexamined concept may mask an underlying confusion”. In the case of this inquiry, conceptual analysis is conflated with other methodological approaches not only to clarify the link of the WCEDs service provision model in relation to the constitutive meaning that I will constructed later, but also to understand how related concepts in the WCEDs service provision model link to the characteristics of a learning organisation.

Conceptual analysis enables us not only to focus on the fundamental issues on morality, but also on actions and the important message of the concept (Hirst & Peters 1970:9). Thus, the dual emphasis focuses not only on moral issues but also on the epistemology of concepts under investigation. Therefore, in the analysis of concepts I ultimately explore the hidden assumption underlying particular words in the WCEDs service provision policies as well as exposing biases, distortions and limitations that are implicit within a concept. Margolis (2002:29) argues that recent theories of interpretation are “still largely confined to the conceptual resources.”

The reason for careful analysis of concepts is that clarity of concepts may lead to the use of more appropriate tools to understand, justify or correct education service provision and transformation models. Clearly defined concepts may also clarify the underlying reasons and assumptions for using certain words in policy documents and their context. Examining the WCEDs educational practice and policies through conceptual analysis may lead to a better understanding of important issues and practices within the Western Cape education system and may also provide possible guidelines for adjustments and alternatives.

1.7.2 Interviews

My reason for using interviews in this dissertation is to add substantive and methodological value to my investigation and to bring me in direct contact with the subject under investigation. It will also highlight the degree of compatibility or conflict that may exist between practice and theory. Furthermore, these interviews will give me an understanding of how educators experience the WCEDs service provision policies and how this experience may impact on their willingness to contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. Also, how Circuit

managers, Curriculum Advisors and Directors experience their workload and contribution to the service delivery model in an attempt to achieve the WCEDs objective of developing schools into learning organisations. It is my intention not only to construct data, but to purposely connect information to a conceptual or theoretical base. Another reason for using interviews as a methodological tool is to understand the WCED's service provision agenda to turn schools into learning organisations. In this regard interviews will enable me examine the complexity of individual members within the WCED and their understanding of an ideal service delivery model as they collectively work together to give meaning to the WCEDs culture of service delivery.

Interviews are qualitative data-gathering techniques designed to obtain information about people's views, opinions, ideas and experiences. Holstein and Gubrium (2003:67) argue that the aim of interviewing is to "provide a way of generating empirical data about the social world by asking people to talk about their lives." I argue that not all information collected through interviews can be accepted as authentic. It may happen that an interviewee may say something but in reality believe something else. Therefore it has to be understood that interviews are inevitably influenced by perceptions, language and culture.

Holstein and Gubrium (2003:68) state that "treating interviewing as a social encounter in which knowledge is constructed suggest the possibility that the interview is not merely a neutral conduit or source of distortion, but is instead a site of, and occasion for, producing reportable knowledge itself." This then implies that if interviews are to be use as a method, they should be guided by analytical guidelines. This means comparing interviews with policy documents, school context and the literary understanding of a learning organisation.

The aim of interviews is to clarify beliefs and meanings rather than action. Interviews focus on what people say rather than what they do, because often people's actions are not in accordance with their words. Silverman (2001:140) notes that interviewing is "undoubtedly the most widely used technique for conducting systematic social inquiry." Wengraf (2001:37) in citing Briggs (1986:1) and Brenner (1981:15), point out that "90% of all social science research involves interviews." Furthermore, Peräkylä (2008:351) states that "Most qualitative research probably is based on

interviews”. If this is the case, then interview as a research methodology must have significant credibility in terms of providing an insight into people’s perceptions of their experience.

Interviews involve asking questions in a manageable way in order to help researchers explore the topic and to probe for further thoughts and reflections in an attempt to understand human beings and their ideas. Arksey and Knight (1999:32) also see interviews as “a way to uncovering and exploring the meanings that underpin people’s lives, routines, behaviours, feelings etc.” It is therefore the intention through conducting interviews to uncover the perceptions and behaviour of the practitioners and policy makers in the WCED and to understand their contribution to developing schools into learning organisations. Interviewing can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured. I shall now give a brief outline of the three different types of interviews and explain my choice of interview type.

“The most common type of interviewing is individual face-to-face verbal interchange”, which can further be classified into structured, unstructured and semi-structured (Fontana & Frey 2008:119). An interview is a recognised method of gathering information in the social sciences. Through interviews, the interviewer usually forms hypotheses. Powney and Watts (1987:2) argue that if we consider interviews as a serious research method, they “must be conducted and reported as rigorously as any other method.” The basic skills that are essential for interviews include, among others, logic, listening skills, remembering and perceptive skills.

Gerson and Horowitz (2002:201) posit that “individual interviews provide the opportunity to examine how large-scale social transformations are experienced, interpreted, and ultimately shaped by the responses of strategic social actors.” This is an indication that the service provision model is ultimately shaped by key individuals within the WCED and that their understanding of a learning organisation will ultimately prevail.

Powney and Watts (1987) identify two main interview styles, namely respondent interviews and informant interviews. In the former the interviewer controls the entire process and the interviews are mostly structured. In the latter, the aim is to gain some

understanding of the perceptions of the interviewee. Interviews serve a specific purpose. They may serve as a means to explore and gather experiential data that may help the researcher to gain a richer and deeper understanding of a human phenomenon. Van Manen (1997:98) contends that the art of hermeneutic interviewing is to keep the question open in order to keep the interviewer and interviewee focused on the “things being questioned”. In this situation, the interviews are intended to ascertain whether the WCED’s service provision is aligned with its objective to develop schools into learning organisations.

The interviewer should also have a fairly good idea of what kind of information he/she hopes to obtain to be able to construct a theoretically informed interview schedule beforehand. Through interviews I hope to make the connection between policies and practice, and determine how these two coalesce to ultimately shape the WCEDs objective to develop schools into learning organisations. However, in an interview there is always an element of surprise and uncovering the unknown. Even though respondents are carefully selected to capture the largest part of the topic under investigation, it often happens that what the interviewees say is not always congruent with their actions.

It was very beneficial to conduct a thorough literature review before conducting interviews. This enables the researcher to have a better knowledge of the data that allows more consideration for context, understanding and better respond to the interviewer. Examining your instrument before you conduct your interview can be very beneficial. One of the best ways of doing this is to make a list of key points you hope to address in your questions. In this inquiry I shall draw up the question in such a way that it give me an understanding of how practitioners and WCED officials experience and respond to the service delivery model under investigation.

In this dissertation, I shall make use of semi-structured interviews to generate qualitative data and to foster flexibility in my collection and analysing data. It may also enable me to formulate better follow-up questions in areas of interest as they emerge. I shall make use of open-ended questions to encourage reflection and enhance the rich description of ideas and experience. An important consideration in

interviewing is how to protect the interviewees from breaches of confidence. Therefore complying with a code of research ethics is essential.

I shall make use of semi-structured interviews for part of my investigation in order to access information at first hand. This method will not only allow me to set up pre-determined questions, but at the same time allow an opportunity for the interviewees to respond and inform me about issues which I may have overlooked. Gleaning information in this way will enable me to construct a better conceptualisation of the service provision model and ascertain whether it is sufficient do assist schools becoming learning organisations. The interviews conducted will also enable me to gain closer contact with the subject under investigation which is the service provision's ability to assist schools becoming learning organisations and to gain access to "people's subjective experiences and attitudes" (Peräkylä, 2008:351) that are usually inaccessible.

1.7.2.1 Structured interviews

In this type of interview the interviewer asks his/her interviewee a series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response categories. Through this the interviewer aims to present precise data in a systematic way in order to explain behaviour within pre-established categories. At the same time these pre-established questions also aim to minimise mistakes. When conducting structured interviews the interviewer should take cognisance of the fact that interviews take place in a socially interactive context and are therefore influenced by that context. As Converse and Schuman (1974:53) observe: "There is no single interview style that fits every occasion or all respondents." Therefore interviewers must always be mindful of respondent differences and must be flexible enough to improvise and accommodate unanticipated developments.

1.7.2.2 Semi-structured interviews

This type of interview is more flexible in that it provides an opportunity for follow-up questions or allow for new questions derived from responses to existing questions. In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer is not restricted to drawing up pre-

established questions, but is able to set-up a framework for issues to be explored. Often unanticipated information is revealed that stimulates new questions and responses. Semi-structured interviews enable the interviewer to capitalise on this kind of information.

1.7.2.3 Unstructured interviews

In this type of interview questions are constructed, changed and adapted to meet the interviewee's understanding or belief, or the context of the situation. Through unplanned questions the interviewer can also clarify the meaning of responses. Sometimes important information comes up that may otherwise not have been thought of or did not seem relevant before the interview. Unstructured interviews can be very time consuming and lots of data are collected, much of which can be irrelevant.

To summarise the discussion on research methods: this inquiry is designed first to undertake a conceptual analysis of the WCED's service provision policies in order to construct relevant and meaningful questions for the empirical investigation to follow later. The intention of these interviews is to highlight the existing challenges that schools and Circuit Teams face and ascertain whether the WCED's service provision alone is sufficient to contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. The interviews, conducted with EMDC directors, Circuit Team members and schools, serve to reveal their experiences, perceptions and reflections on the contribution the WCED's support provision are making.

1.8 INTRODUCTION TO KEY CONCEPTS

I now want to introduce a group of concepts that will help to clarify the subsequent discussion. Concepts that are not clearly expressed may lead to inadequate research findings and possible misinterpretation of such findings. The objective of this inquiry is therefore to examine some important concepts and to clarify their meaning. A concept is sometimes ambiguous, value-laden or is open to more than one meaning or interpretation. Hence, it is important to clarify and contextualise its meaning. Key concepts in this study includes: schools, learning organisations and the EMDC.

1.8.1 School

Cambridge defines school as “a place where children go to be educated.” Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:5) take this a step further and define a school as an organisation, “a system of interweaving parts, linking together in particular ways.” A school is an institution where students learn from teachers. These institutions include primary schools, secondary schools, vocational schools and university. Simply put, a school is a place where teaching and learning takes place.

1.8.2 Learning organisation

This is just a brief discourse on what a learning organisation entails. A more detailed analysis follows in the chapter two. A learning organisation consists of as a group of people who are in pursuit of a common purpose and with a collective commitment to continuously evaluate the value of those purposes, modifying them when necessary and continuously developing more effective and efficient ways of accomplishing that purpose.

1.8.3 Education Management and Development Centres (EMDCs)

Education Management and Development Centres (EMDCs) were initiated in early 2001 to replace the former nine Area Offices. EMDCs are centres where schools can come for further education and training on new approaches to teaching. These centres were developed in an attempt to bring Head Office closer to schools and to assist schools to become learning organisations.

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter has highlighted the focus of the inquiry and what approaches will be used in this investigation. It also gave a brief explanation on each research method and how these different approaches will contribute to the investigation. To undertake an investigation, one has to be clear about its purpose. Conducting a research inquiry involves many considerations. Consequently, this inquiry will involve a reflection on

the WCED's practice that will require clarification of prevailing assumptions and criteria as well as the consistency between such principles and prevailing practice.

I have presented different concepts and theories that I will be using in conducting this research inquiry. However, it should be noted that while these theories are made available by researchers, they do not provide "scientifically verified" ideas. Rather, these theories are given as interpretations, which can only be accepted by the user based on his/her "self-understanding."

The point is to reflect on one's own practices and modify them based on self-reflection. The same applies to research methodology. The conscientious selection of a particular methodology already indicates your preferred technique for collecting and analysing data. There is therefore no exclusive method or theory prescribed to adequately provide answers to a research problem. However, I contend that a theory that ascribes to interpretation with an emancipatory outcome is the most appropriate one to explain and analyse educational transformation in the Western Cape. Moreover, a critical perspective is more likely to lead to self-reflection and may possibly encourage a more emancipatory interest in school development in the Western Cape.

It is sometimes in the combination of more than one method or theory that one can gain greater clarity on a particular research inquiry. As Pratt and Swann (2003:182) put it: "The advancement of knowledge depends on disagreement." Hence the combination of approaches in this investigation focuses on "a critical (critical theory) hermeneutical (based on understanding) inquiry into schools as learning organisations (empirical analysis).

The underlying aim of this dissertation is to investigate the WCED's education service delivery practice to ascertain whether its model is adequate to contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. I shall critically examine the WCED's choice of service delivery model and whether it is suitable to attain their desired objectives. To do this, I shall make use of the different approaches mentioned above to determine whether their choice of model will assist schools to become learning organisations.

Simply put, this inquiry examines whether the WCED's educational service delivery practice and policy are compatible with its objectives. This includes an investigation into its educational policies and practices and systems of accountability.

1.10 PROGRAMME OF STUDY

To fulfil one of the main goals of this inquiry Chapter Two provides a detailed analysis of a learning organisation, the important features and aspect of a learning organisation as well as identifying the framework of the learning process within the organisation. In doing so, I analyse the concept of organisations and institutions. I then construct the constitutive meanings that inform a learning organisation. The chapter also identifies the role players and highlights the contribution they make in the development of a learning organisation. It then investigates which factors contribute to the establishment of a learning organisation and what factors hinder its development. In doing this, I shall review the literature on the characteristics of a learning organisation. I look at the conceptual flaws and then conclude with whether it is worthwhile pursuing the establishment of a learning organisation.

Chapter Three provides a detailed policy analysis of the WCED's service delivery model and how these policies relate to the constitutive meanings constructed in the previous chapter. I will then ascertain how these policies contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. Often the success of policies is evaluated in terms of whether they have been effectively implemented. I shall specifically look at whatever implementation gaps exist between policy documents and how they manifest in the workplace. The chapter also identifies the role players and highlights the contribution they make in the development of schools as learning organisations. It then investigates which factors contribute to the establishment of a learning organisation and what factors hinders its development.

Chapter Four provides a narrative account of interviews conducted with senior management team members at Head Office, EMDC directors, Circuit Teams, school principals, teachers and student councils. Once the data were collected, they were codified against the five constitutive meanings that where constructed from the literature review in Chapter Three as well as the WCED policy documents. The

interviews will focus mainly on the service provision agenda of the WCED and how the WCED service delivery model contributes towards schools becoming learning organisations.

It is my contention that the no service provision model is completely without flaws and that even the WCED's model should be subjected to scrutiny. I hope that through the triangulation of interview data, policy documents and the constitutive meanings conceptual flaws be highlighted and new themes would emerge. My rationale for looking into the WCED's service provision agenda is to ascertain whether their current service provision model is sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations as intended in its foundation.

In Chapter Five I aim to provide outline the key points derived from the conclusion of my study. In this chapter I reflect on my journey through this inquiry. After reflecting on policy documents in relation to how they were implemented in reality, I conclude with my final remarks on whether or not EMDCs are effective and efficient service deliverers. I also consider whether the idea of a learning organisation is worth pursuing and, if so, what are the appropriate ways of establishing learning organisations.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT CONSTITUTES A LEARNING ORGANISATION?

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to construct a more detailed overview and explicates the constitutive meanings of a learning organisation. The main objective of this chapter is to create a better understanding of a learning organisation. I do this through conducting a literature review on learning organisations and construct the constitutive meanings from the literature. Furthermore, I want to understand the WCED's perception of learning organisations in relation to what it is perceived to be in the literature. In doing that, I shall explore how these constitutive meanings are linked to the development of schools into learning organisation. Also, I want to conduct a critical hermeneutical exploration of the concept of 'constitutive meanings'.

After constructing the constitutive meanings of what a learning organisation entails, the idea is to relate the service delivery model of the WCED to the constitutive meanings to ascertain what the underlying principles are in their service delivery model, and how it relates to the service delivery policy document. This would enable me to provide a conceptual elaboration on a learning organisation as it applies to the WCED. I shall use the WCED to exemplify my point. Furthermore, the aim is to ascertain whether policy and practice constitute a coherent whole.

2.2 ORGANISATIONS VERSUS INSTITUTIONS

In the sections below I will draw on the distinction between organisations and institutions to find out whether schools can be classified as organisations or institutions, or whether these two concepts can be used interchangeably when referring to schools. I refer specifically to Theron's (2002) perspective on an organisation. He (2002:78) describes an organisation as "a formal structure in which people stand in a certain relation to one another. Within the formal structure, people's actions are aimed at achieving certain common objectives." This is consistent with the

nature of schools, which comprise practitioners with various skills contributing to a common cause of providing quality teaching to learners. He concludes that “Knowing the characteristics of organisations is one way of understanding the essence of the school as an organisation.” Like Moloji (2002), Davidoff and Lazarus (1997), and Coppieter (2005), he directly relates the nature of schools to the features of an organisation.

In this preliminary discussion, it is already apparent that organisations are made up of people. It is these people within the organisation who create new ideas. Therefore understanding the behaviour and perceptions of people in a particular organisation would enable you to have a better understanding of the organisation. In creating and sharing new ideas, people express themselves and in doing so create a social order. To understand an organisation therefore requires an understanding of the perceptions and behaviour of individuals that make up the organisation.

2.2.1 Organisations

The literary review on an organisation will provide us with a preliminary understanding of the relationship between schools and organisations. This understanding is crucial for our later analysis of a learning organisation and how it pertains to schools. I start by drawing on Theron’s perspective on an organisation and look for parallels between schools and organisation.

Theron (2002:103) gives the following perspectives on organisations:

- Organisations exist primarily to accomplish established goals;
- For any organisation, a structural form can be designed and implemented to fit its particular set of circumstances (such as goals, strategies, environment, technology and people);
- Organisations work most effectively when environmental turbulence and personal preferences are constrained by norms of rationality. Structure ensures that people focus on getting the job done rather than doing whatever they please;
- Specialisation permits higher levels of individual expertise and performance;

- Coordination and control are essential for effectiveness. Depending on the task and environment, coordination may be achieved through authority, rules, policies, standards operating procedures, information systems, meetings, lateral relationships or a variety of more informal techniques;
- Organisational problems typically originate from inappropriate structures or inadequate systems and can be resolved through restructuring or developing new systems.

These perspectives as given by Theron contain important elements that make up an organisation. However, the above-mentioned perspectives are by no means exhaustive. Other elements that are equally important in sustaining a learning organisation include: culture, motivation, benchmarking and accountability.

I further draw on Ndhlovu *et al.* (1999:15), who refer to organisations as “any group which works together in a planned, co-ordinated way to achieve some common purpose could be described as an organisation.” Schools generally consist of a group of educators working together to educate and instil certain values in learners that may be used to benefit their community. Taylor and Thackwray (2001:88) identify the following characteristics of an organisation:

- Has a plan with aims and objectives;
- Has clear priorities which link the development of people with its aims and objectives at organisational, team and individual level;
- Makes sure that managers have the knowledge and skills they need to develop their people;
- Can show that people learn and develop effectively;
- Can show that the development of people has improved the performance of the organisation, teams and individuals.

The above-mentioned characteristics as highlighted by Taylor & Thackwray (2001) clearly harmonises with the understanding of an organisation in Theron (2002) and Ndhlovu *et al.* (1999). Mentz and Xaba (2002:39, citing Griffiths 1952:2) also classify schools as organisations on the basis of their administrative duties when he claims that “all administrative acts take place within the context of an organisation.” Furthermore,

Mentz and Xaba (2002:39) in citing Griffith (1952) “regard the school as a social organisation and conceive of administration as an integral part of its organisation.” This corresponds with the notion of coordination and control within an organisation to achieve effectiveness, as mentioned earlier. Already here we find a significant link in that both organisations and institutes are made up of people and the way that they interact to achieve a common interest.

Organisations also operate in terms of rules. Often these rules are regulative. It is these regulative rules that constitute an organisation. Therefore any organisation that does not prescribe to the above-mentioned rules or characteristics would not be an organisation. You may have a group of people interacting with an amount of activity going on, but not call them an organisation. Rules of this nature are called constitutive rules. This simply means that schools have to comply with certain conditions to qualify as organisations.

It is clear from the literature that an organisation is comprised of people who work together in an organised way regardless of the circumstances and within the framework of certain rules and regulations to obtain corporate objectives. In order to meet these objectives, the organisation must ensure that its members are appropriately empowered and skilled.

2.2.2 Institutions

I now look at the characteristics of an institution to establish the link between organisations and institutes. This link will then be related to schools to ascertain whether schools can be called organisations or institutions. Institutions also have distinct qualities. I shall now draw on the literature to look at the characteristics of an institution with specific reference to similarities or contrast to those of an organisation. Ostrom (2005: 3) associates institutions with “the prescriptions that humans use to organise all forms of repetitive and structured interactions including those within families, neighbourhoods, markets, firms, sports leagues, churches, private associations and governments at all scales.”

Institutions seem to place more emphasis on human interaction. Institutions, like organisations, also involve social purpose and performances which go beyond individual human lives and intentions.

They also involve the making and enforcing of rules governing cooperative human behaviour. The opportunities or constraints, the benefits or exclusions people are exposed to are all affected by “the rules or absence of rules” that shape the institution (Ostrom 2005:3). Institutions are associated with the customs, habits and culture that form part of a society and organisations and public service. A direct link is thus established between institutions and organisations.

Furthermore, formal organisations are commonly referred to as institutions. Anderson (2005:37) concurs by stating that “learning organisations would seem to be logically applied to institutions of higher education, given that they themselves are entities designed to retain, produce, and disseminate knowledge.” Even though specific reference is made to higher education, his assumption, I believe, may also apply to schools, since schools also retain, produce and disseminate knowledge. Coppieters (2005:129) also coined the two terms by stating that if schools achieve their goals, they “have to change from institutions that transfer knowledge into learning organisations.”

An institution as portrayed in the literature lays a great deal of emphasis on the human interaction within the framework of rules and regulation which relate more to socialisation within a group. As already pointed out, there appears to be a conceptual link between institutions and organisation. This correlation is found in the relationships, rules and regulations that are found in both institutions and organisations.

Through careful examination of the above mentioned link between organisations and institutions, it appears that there are many key elements that connect institutions with organisations. It is also clear that organisations focus mainly on managerial aspects, while institutions focus on human behavioural aspects. It is thus my understanding that both aspects are crucial elements in the existence of companies and schools.

On the basis of the literature, I argue that there is a conceptual link that ties institutes with organisations. This conceptual link is also linked with schools, which enables us to use the two concepts: organisation and institution interchangeably in relation to schools. On the one hand, Busher (2006:5) says that “there are many different ways of viewing schools as institutions” and yet, on the other hand, states that “There are several different approaches to make sense of schools as organisations” (2006:7). Thus, it is my contention that the concepts, institutions and organisations can be used interchangeably. I further posit that most of the elements highlighted in the explanation of institutions and organisations are dominant in a school’s existence. The most direct reference to schools as learning organisation is by Davidoff *et al.* (1995:174) statement that “Schools are learning organisations.” I am therefore satisfied with the classification of schools as organisations and shall henceforth refer to a school as an organisation.

2.3 SCHOOLS AS LEARNING ORGANISATIONS (LITERATURE REVIEW)

The literature review will provide me with possible lenses to construct a conceptual framework of a learning organisation. This conceptual framework will provide more clarity with regards to the strength and weaknesses of some educational policies as to understand if the service delivery model is sufficient to assist schools into learning organisation. The concept of a learning organisation was first advanced in the 1920s, but emerged as a topic only in the late 1980s. The idea, however, only gained prominence in the mid- to late 1990s. Many publications followed, including Peter Senge’s (a key proponent of a learning organisation) *The Fifth Discipline* (1990).

I have to state that defining or describing a learning organisation is a complicated matter because of its dynamic nature and its context specificness. Kelleher and the Gender at Work Collaborative (2003:78) also concurs that “a learning organisation is not a ‘thing’ that can be describe in any complete way that would allow us to say, this is a learning organisations.” According to Senge (1990:3), learning organisations are “organisations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are natured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the

whole together.” This formulation draws on two levels of development namely the individual and team level. It also points to the attributes of organisations and individuals and the way they ought to work together within the organisation. It has to be understood that the essence of a learning organisation is change where individuals and teams are committed to a shared vision.

To create a collaborative environment in schools, effective learning must first take place. Furthermore, for effective learning to take place, teachers need to be more in control of classroom teaching and learning, because often teachers spend much of their teaching time trying to establish order or to discipline learners. Establishing such control would enable teachers to better expand their capacity and bring about the desired results. This would further stimulate training and development.

The concept of a learning organisation was mainly associated with business but now it is firmly entrenched in education. Dalin (1978:39) states that “Schools as organisations, and the education system at large, have often been structured and managed according to organisational models taken from other sectors in society.” Furthermore, Hughes (2000:4) draws on Barhams, Fraser & Heath (1988:12) who refers to a learning organisation as “One where training and personal development are an integral part of the organisation and where learning is a continuous process, rather than being a bolted-on activity at various points in an individual’s career.”

Moloi (2005:9) asserts that “a learning organisation is one that learns constantly and transforms itself, it is able to deal proactively with change.” This proactive engagement occurs in an environment of experimentation and innovation where all members participate in the developmental process and measure their achievements and efforts against those of other members and/or departments in the organisation. All this happens within the framework of the organisations vision, mission and goals. This sets the stage for perpetual learning and reflection of processes and practices.

A learning organisation operates within the confines of experimentation and innovation, but with the understanding that “innovation depended on both freedom and control.” (Kelleher and the Gender at Work Collaborative 2003:78). It is therefore necessary to actively engage in training and development programmes within an

environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. When teachers are in reasonable control of classroom teaching, they can more easily expand their capacity to bring about good results.

For sustainable development of a learning organisation it has to be well-connected to a larger body who shares the same interest. Moloï (2005:71) refers to this idea as “systems thing”. Kelleher and the Gender at Work Collaborative (2003: 77) points out that “permeability to influence and to ideas from outside becomes an important part of the equation.” This enables us to think outside the box. Kelleher’s idea support Moloï’s (2005:21) notion that “Interdependency, interconnectedness and interrelatedness are the fabric of the discipline of systems thinking.” An interactive relationship like is very dynamic and therefore requires skills and active engagement to shift the good from the bad influences.

Interaction with outside variables allows for more flexibility within the organisation and removes fixed hierarchical structures within the organisation. It also creates opportunities to “develop ways of experimenting with possible responses to the change and uncertainty.” (Moloï 2005:5)

In this way, members of the organisation maximises their potential while contributing to the operational and strategically development of the organisation. When an organisation draws from all available potential, not only is there a good flow of communication through the organisation but its influence begins to extend to external variables.

2.3.1 Characteristics of a learning organisation

Through my exploration of learning organisations I noted that the fundamental aim of a learning organisation is to encourage proactive involvement in change and transformation. A learning organisation recognises the need for change and actively pursues it. It carefully evaluates its objectives and refines its position about what worked and what did not. The change in teaching and learning is no longer an option but a necessity. To qualify as learning organisations schools have to carefully evaluate their objectives and refine their position in order to accommodate what works and to discard what did not.

Moloi (2005:9) argues that learning in a learning organisation occurs at four levels, namely: “the individual, team, organisation and societal levels.” These four levels are integrally linked with each other. This makes the development of a learning organisation a highly collaborative process with communication as a significant contributor. In a learning organisation teachers and learners are encouraged to actively engage in teaching and learning and to exchange information. This notion encourages perpetual learning which can be translated as “a vision of excellence”. (Moloi 2005:12) It also creates a flexible and knowledgeable workforce where people will embrace change through a shared vision. Furthermore, it alludes to the fact that learning organisations always try to create a platform for continuous change, thus nurturing and fostering transformation. It envisions the future, tries to understand what it will look like, and how the organisation should be adapting to prepare for the future.

All stakeholders’ opinions are sensitively handled. Everybody is free to exchange new ideas without fear of failure. Learning organisations always make sure that all major role players and contributors in the education process play a meaningful part in the continual development of the schools. Everybody within the organisation has the responsibility to think and act. Teachers and administrators should know the importance of their role and are thus motivated to add their contribution. They are also allowed to use their acquired skills and knowledge beyond a specific job requirement.

I should immediately concede that hierarchical structures are not essentially negative in themselves, and if used with the necessary flexibility may be very useful. By flexibility I mean that the lines of communication to different levels in the hierarchy should be easily accessible in certain circumstances. Adler (2004:308) draws on research done by Burns and Stalker (1961), Bennis and Slater (1964), Mintzberg (1979), Scott (1992) and Daft (1998), who concluded that a hierarchical structure “may be efficient in the performance of routine partitioned tasks but encounters enormous difficulty in the performance of innovation tasks requiring the generation of new knowledge.”

The literature suggests that learning takes place at different levels and under different circumstances. Argyris and Schon (1996) identify three models of learning, namely single-loop learning, double-loop learning and deuterio-learning. Loops of learning simply refer to the collection and use of information that comes from the relationship of the learning organisation with the community and businesses it serves. In this situation it refers to the way that information is retained in schools and the relevance of schooling to the community and businesses schools serves in their local communities.

Single-loop learning refers to the most basic learning and attempts not to disrupt anything, but tries to leave things the way they are. It basically refers to ‘survival learning’, learning to identify and correct errors, and trying to return things to normal. Single-loop learning occurs when a mistake is found between learning and practice, and then corrected. In the case of single-loop learning the gathered information is used to make adjustments where necessary to keep the organisation functioning well. In this situation no disruption is intended in the organisational theories, but only the process of how the organisation operates is adjusted.

Single-loop learning basically develops knowledge that helps to meet objectives. Single-loop learning is essential for daily routine and repetitive things and “it helps get the everyday job done” (Argyris 1999:68). In a classroom situation this would mean doing the required time of teaching as stipulated through policy. It also requires transmission of a certain amount of knowledge as stipulated by the curriculum.

It is my contention, based on my experience as a teacher and having conducted workshops at schools in three different districts, that there are many schools in the Western Cape (especially in formerly disadvantaged communities) that are struggling to operate on the basis of single-loop learning. I contend that if schools are to develop into learning organisations, they have to operate at least beyond the level of single-loop. I further contend that while some formerly disadvantaged schools are still operating under dysfunctional conditions, there are many other schools that are indeed operating on and beyond the level of single loop learning. With sustainable support and intervention such schools can develop into learning organisations.

Double-loop learning is applicable in an organisation that wishes to adapt to changes in its external environment. It basically attempts to clarify and constantly focus on particular objectives. In this situation the effectiveness and legitimating of existing norms, values and practices are constantly reviewed in order to respond to the existing needs. Argyris (1999:68) argues that double-loop learning occurs when inconsistencies are corrected “by first examining and altering the governing variables and then the action. This then indicates that double-loop learning involves an additional step in its process. This idea is in line with Roper & Pettit (2003:3) who argues that “In double-loop, organisations consistently test assumptions, identify the roots of problems, and are open to fundamental rethinking of strategy.” This implies a constant learning experience.

Argyris and Shön (1996) point out that double-loop learning requires that individuals be willing to question their own assumptions and behaviours. Double-loop learning propagates fundamental change, if necessary. This means that the learning organisation must have the necessary mechanisms to enact change and to make the adjustments if the need arises to effectively use the loops of learning. I argue that there are schools in the Western Cape who are moving with the changing times and thus operating at the level of double-loop learning. This level, I believe, is part of what constitutes a learning organisation. At this level effective and efficient teaching and learning take place and teachers exert a relatively good influence over their learners.

Through my teaching experience I noted that even though active teaching and learning take place at this level, in many former disadvantaged schools very little and in some cases no engagement with provincial or national education policies takes place. Schools at this level operate mostly on a teaching level where providing quality education is its main objective as well as satisfying their clients. In such situations schools are more focused on customer satisfaction and do not have time to engage with educational policies.

Deutero-learning, on the other hand, requires extensive engagement as well as questioning the organisation’s fundamental role. Deutero-learning appeals to an

organisation's ability to proactively engage with changes in the external environment. In essence it fundamentally exposes an organisation's ability to learn how to learn.

This level, I believe, represents schools that are fully operating as learning organisations. I further argue that at this level school management should be actively engaging with provincial and national policies. Schools on this level should be able to challenge policies and laws that they feel may be irrelevant or harmful to their school's development. These types of schools are in tune with new policy changes and know exactly how to utilise policy changes to serve their school's best interests.

As already pointed out, most daily activities of an organisation require single-loop learning. However, for long-term development of an organisation double-loop learning becomes essential. Most daily activities in schools involve teaching, learning, administration and management. Since it is the intention of the WCED to transform schools into learning organisations, it is fair to assume that the WCED intends to get schools in the Western Cape on to the level of double-loop learning. And based on the requirements of this level, getting schools on the level of double-loop learning would require more than just an improvement of resources to schools. In fact, schools themselves should have a willingness to take ownership of their own development and should initiate their own development process. Therefore, it would be fair to assume that for schools to qualify as a learning organisation, they should at least operate on double-loop learning and deuteron level.

2.3.2 Ethos and culture of a learning organisation

The culture of an organisation generally dictates the values and norms that determine its development. Dalin *et al.* (1993:20) draw on Rutter *et al.* (1979), who posit that "The ethos of the school as a whole and the climate of the individual classroom have a direct bearing upon teaching and learning." The flurries of changes that have impacted on education in the post-apartheid dispensation have created both crisis and opportunity. In this context it has become important for schools to start systematic long-term planning in terms of school development and the service they render to learners and society. Schools also had to redefine their role and involvement in their communities. This means that schools had to become flexible to make short-term

changes to design a learning environment that would facilitate meeting the current needs of students.

The most important determinant of how a learning organisation operates is the culture that evolves as all role players go about their duties, coping with the quest of teaching and learning in a challenging environment of competition and integration. Culture provides an understanding of how and why to behave in a certain way. The more a culture tries to reduce or avoid anxiety, the more it will resist change.

It is generally understood that people from different cultural backgrounds perceive and respond to the world differently, and attribute meaning to events and experiences in different ways. Therefore self-awareness, communication patterns, decision making, support systems and, interaction styles are different for people from different cultural or racial groups. A strong organisational culture communicates clear roles to all stakeholders and has consistent guidelines for employee behaviour and performance and sets unambiguous goals and objectives for handling human resources.

A learning organisation will embrace and be committed to certain beliefs and values that are important for the continued existence of the organisation and the development of all role players. These values, beliefs and processes are usually placed at the centre of the organisation, so that the scope and scale of local and provincial challenges can be adequately addressed in order to establish effective learning and teaching. Managing cultural diversity involves helping individual members in the organisation to cope better with cultural diversity.

A very high premium is placed on the relationship between all those directly and indirectly involved in the activities of the organisation. All role players are connected somehow. Therefore a learning organisation should do whatever it takes to protect, develop and nurture the relationship between all stakeholders. Failing to do so may tarnish their reputation or impede the development of the organisation.

The organisational culture plays a phenomenal role in the day-to-day running of the organisation. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:41) posit that its impact is so far reaching that it “influences and affects the life of the school in ways that people in the school

are barely aware of.” One of the fundamental principles of a learning organisation is the idea of collective learning and developing a culture of perpetual development, which not only benefits the individual but the organisation as a whole.

Developing schools into learning organisations depends on the learning culture that prevails at schools. Senge *et al.* (2005: 48) draw on Shchein’s belief that “we can always learn much more about organisational culture through careful observation and reflective participation than from reading mission and value statements.” This indeed holds true especially as I reflect on my own experience as an educator teaching in a particular environment as well as on the many workshops I attended that were organised by the WCED. In most cases the information is handed down to local schools and schools have to delegate their representatives. The content of workshops, the time schedule and the quantity of information are all determined by the WCED head office.

Bringing about changes in the culture of schools is not an easy matter. Dalin *et al* (1994:52) draws on research that suggests “the school is one of the most complicated social organisations in existence.” Many of our formerly disadvantaged schools in the Western Cape are either in need of advice or they are dysfunctional. As such I believe the WCED as the official service provider and the local community can play a meaningful role in ensuring ongoing support and assistance. With the necessary guidance (not control) the WCED, EMDCs and MFTs can develop a common understanding of the activities and needs of schools and hence positively effect change in schools. This common understanding begins with the identification of the needs of teachers, schools and the community in which these teachers work.

2.3.3 Factors contributing to the establishment of a learning organisation

Schools should constantly look for new partners, programmes and initiatives that they can use to achieve high quality and customer satisfaction. I argue that it is a narrow view to think that schools must develop in a particular way and that a certain deterministic and a bureaucratic approach would offer appropriate conditions to the developmental processes in schools. The successful development of a learning organisation requires the empowerment of all role players through expanded rights,

meaningful information and a desire for continual learning. Using the potential of all participants within an organisation, it can achieve its objectives and meet current and future challenges. This will create a climate conducive to continuous learning that will result in improved teaching and learning.

Investment in the training and development of teachers could meaningfully contribute toward developing learning organisations and may cater for their current and future needs. Pearn *et al.* (1995:71) argue that “It is rare for work groups to identify their own learning needs and then choose ways in which these needs might be satisfied.” Therefore it becomes the responsibility of local schools and the department of education to organise and present well-structured training and developmental programmes that will address the needs of teachers and learners.

Collaboration and a highly inclusive level of participation is a necessary condition (*sine qua non*) of a learning organisation. That means that all interest groups or individual should have a voice on all levels in the making of policy. I argue that schools and teachers have first-hand experience of challenges that exist in their classrooms, administration, curriculum and management processes. Schools, especially teachers, should therefore play a significant role in what issues are to be addressed in terms of curriculum, administration and management. Learning organisations always attempt to promote organisational learning of groups.

I argue that it is through group work that collaborative team work is established, closer relationships are forged and fresh ideas result in better understanding. Hence organisational learning focuses on group learning. Learning can take place by setting up a group and by interacting within that group in which individuals have their own objectives and apply simple rules of engagement. The question now remains: what is the mechanism that drives organisational learning?

In dealing with this question Coppieters (2005:135) draws on Leithwood *et al.* (1995), who provide a list of the following driving forces:

- A widely shared vision;
- A professional culture;

- Interaction and authentic participation in the key decisions;
- Policies and resources.

A combination of all these practices in a school may be a good recipe to produce quality education for all. This is in contrast to the WCED's quick-fix solution that is informed by the understanding that "The WCED will need to ensure enough resources are provided to produce good quality education for everybody" (Hartley 2006:96). Furthermore, it also creates the impression that the WCED is subscribing to a managerialist approach to service provision. I shall expound on managerialism later in this inquiry. Quality education, I believe, can only be achieved if all of abovementioned practices are firmly entrenched in the Western Cape education system in combination with staff development, leadership and collaborative planning.

2.3.4 Factors that hinder the establishment of a learning organisation

In any organisation there will always be factors that will stifle development, whether they are factors inside or outside that organisation. Some of the most common factors include personal clashes and defensiveness, animosity towards one another or conflicting ideas as well as hostility between groups within the organisation. Similarly, tension may exist within schools as new practices increase workload, clash with traditional methods of teaching and the marking out of professional turf by those in leadership position.

Other challenges may include crime, promiscuity, poverty, drug abuse or natural resistance to change. These factors are sometimes unavoidable and should be dealt with in one way or the other. These very factors sometimes bog down teachers in their attempt to provide good education. It is in this regard that emotional intelligence is closely linked to the idea of a learning organisation.

Hughes (2000:3) refers to emotional intelligence as "both a diagnostic tool and a set of guiding principles which the practitioner can employ to address the central concern of overcoming the barriers to collective learning." Hughes (2000:3) in citing Tran (1998:102) posits that there are strong signs that suggest the future of all corporate

life: a tomorrow where the basic skills of emotional intelligence will be ever more important, in teamwork, in corporation, in helping people to learn together how to work more effectively.

As knowledge-based services and intellectual capital become more central to corporations, improving the way people work together will be a major way to leverage intellectual capital, making a critical competitive difference. To thrive, if not survive; corporations would do well to boost their collective emotional intelligence.

Foster *et al.* (1997:27) claim that “the principle challenge facing those designing schools as learning organisations is to determine the organisational conditions that foster individual and collective learning and to build these conditions into the school.” It should be noted that these conditions cannot be determined by one specific entity (the WCED) only, but should be collectively designed and accepted by all relevant stakeholders, especially teachers at classroom level. This should be done with the understanding that schools are complex organisations and therefore require a systematic approach to foster individual and collective learning.

Individual schools and even teachers are also characterised as working in isolation. Schools should be made aware that they are part of the community and as such form only part of a whole. If schools continue focusing only on their internal resources and ignore the community in which they are located, they may miss out on valuable resources that might have been available had they seen the bigger picture.

On the other hand, as partnerships are forged, barriers to school improvement may arise within and outside schools. Within schools, there may be tensions as new practices and roles collide with existing and comfortable teaching methodologies. Other barriers include, but are not restricted to, marking out turf, poverty, racism and human resistance to change.

I posit that schools are less likely to become learning organisations unless adequate consideration is given to the following:

- Clarity with regards to roles and responsibilities of educators;
- Poor working conditions and physical resources;

- Good school management practices;
- Uneven levels of experience and capacity in governing bodies.

Fullan and Hargreaves (1991:5) argue: “There is simply not enough opportunity and not enough encouragement for teachers to work together, learn from each other, and improve their expertise as a community.” These are the prevailing circumstances in South African schools and more specifically in Western Cape schools, where most of the time is taken up by discipline, administration and compulsory extra-mural activities. The aspect of time constrains remains a significant challenge in South African schools. These are the realities that impact on teaching and learning, and unless these challenges are adequately addressed the development of schools into learning organisations will remain no more than an ideal.

2.3.5 Barriers to the development of learning organisations

The South African education system is characterised by rigid and complex forms of hierarchical structures. Because of the context specific nature of learning organisations complex forms of structures should be revisited. Learning organisations always attempt to reduce complex communication barriers between the different levels within the organisation and encourages coaching and mentoring. The leader in a learning organisation is constantly leading learners who create condition for continuous learning to take place. When leaders over-extend or abuse their power rather than being supportive, it creates barriers to the development of learning organisations.

Free communication in and between different layers within the learning organisation creates a sense of coherence. Teachers perform better if they feel part of the organisation. Barriers of communication are broken down as workers interact and know more about each other's roles, needs and tasks. Members can manage their time better and plan their work more efficiently. Through better communication learning can be enhanced, allowing people to get on with their own job better as they access information more freely.

In the South African context the teaching conditions appears to be worsening. Chisholm *et al.* (2005:182) found that “there is a significant erosion of teaching time during the school day.” This is because teachers are spending too much time dealing with issues that could have been addressed by “social workers, counsellors, school clerks and general workers” (Chisholm *et al* 2005:138). Remuneration of teachers also remains inadequate, given the amount of workload and stress teachers have to endure. It is these factors that impact negatively on teaching and may demotivate prospective students from pursuing teaching careers.

Chisholm *et al.* (2005:19) argue that “Workload is increased amongst other things by an overcrowded curriculum, the number of learning areas to be taught per grade, poorly-planned and cross-cutting, departmental accountability requirements ... class size, the mainstreaming of learners with barriers to learning, and expectations of educators to be a number of things in addition to teaching-school managers, treasurers, fundraisers, counsellors, nurses, administrators, cleaners, learning materials developers, and so on.” These conditions are still prevalent in most Western Cape schools.

As a former teacher I can attest to the validity of Chisholm’s argument, having dealt with these very conditions myself while being a teacher, a South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) shop steward, sports administrator, soccer coach and referee and governing body member. I participated in all these activities while teaching as a post level one teacher. I also experienced that a heavy workload, large class sizes with a load of administrative duties all means less teaching can take place.

Also the teacher/learner ratio has reached a point where the number of teachers coming into the system cannot match the number of teachers leaving the education system. The rationalisation process that was adopted by the National Department of Education to reduce the excess teachers in the system had a negative effect on education and contributed to the shortage of teachers. In terms of the rationalisation process, teachers who were declared redundant at their schools were either offered a severance package deal or were redeployed to areas where a shortage of educators was experienced.

Twenty-two thousand teachers per year are leaving the profession, while only 6000 graduate from universities each year. This has influenced the teacher-learner ratio significantly. The 2007 statistics indicate 929 300 learners and 24 864 educators. Even though the teacher-learner ratio is officially 40:1 for primary schools and 37:1 in secondary schools, it is not uncommon to find classes with more than ratios of up to 50:1 in some schools.

In accordance with the Education Act of 1997, the Minister of Education closed and merged public higher education institutions (HEIs). This was done in response to the National Teacher Educator Audit report, which found that South Africa had an oversupply and overproduction of educators during that period. Shortly after that the White Paper 3 of 1997 came out in support of the transformation of higher education. This move led to a significant decline in teacher training and the number of registered student educators (Ministerial Committee on Teachers Education 2005, Parker 2003).

I contend that developing schools into learning organisations and improving the quality of teaching and learning should involve all role-players. Furthermore, Kennedy and Mandeville (2000:204) admit that “Schools are indeed complex organisations that present a challenge for potential researchers.” Through their service provision model the WCED treat schools as static organisations whose performances can be improved by upgrading their service delivery. This view lacks a coherent and adequate theoretical understanding of the dynamic processes of change. Based on my experience as a teacher, I noted that the underlying view of the WCED service delivery approach to turn schools into learning organisations is more control orientated and less oriented towards growth of learning capacity. Therefore, careful planning and consistent development initiatives may ease the process of development somehow.

The condition is further exacerbated by the promiscuous behaviour of learners, substance abuse and the criminal activities that are ravaging the education system, specifically historically disadvantage schools in the Western Cape. With many of these conditions still prevailing and most South African teachers being underpaid, teachers are faced with the following workload:

- Teaching approximately 160 students per day;
- Compulsory pastoral duties on playground and scholar patrol;
- Teachers have to participate in at least one extra-mural activity after school;
- They are obliged to attend managerial and curriculum workshops;
- They have to attend parent-teachers meetings as scheduled;
- Teachers have to do daily assessment as well as inspection of learner portfolios.

Turning schools into learning organisations is not an easy matter. As mentioned earlier, turning schools into learning organisations would take a collaborative approach that cannot be implemented overnight. This brings me to the aspect of time. Most teachers are so busy meeting deadlines in terms of abovementioned aspects that they have very little time to seriously reflect on their task after a day's work. Teachers hardly have time to keep up with the many changes they are confronted with and to think of ways to implement these changes is a mammoth task.

Therefore careful consideration should be given to a well-structured conceptual framework to drive the developmental initiatives and to make sure that the WCED's goals are congruent with the needs of schools and the community they serve. This will ultimately give impetus to the WCED's educational goal to develop schools into learning organisations.

The point of departure with regards to developing schools in the Western Cape into learning organisations would be to reverse the abovementioned trends. Yet I suspect that if the WCED were to impose what they think might be the right approach to developing schools into learning organisations, it might be met with resistance and reluctance to participate.

2.3.6 Creating learning organisations

I contend that creating learning organisations begins with constructing the idea of a learning organisation before one can develop a learning organisation. The next step is

to ascertain how this learning organisation can assist schools to become more autonomous, self-sufficient and successful learning organisations. It is also important to identify the objectives and needs of educational institutions. These needs should include those of teachers, pupils, schools, EMDCs and the WCED. The important question should be: who initiates and controls the process? I believe that the needs of teachers and learners should form the basis for the provision of creating the concept of learning organisations.

Teaching and learning are continuously changing, especially in the South African context. As such, private corporations and government employers “are showing more dissatisfaction with how schools are preparing young people for the demands of the workplace than ever before” (Middlewood *et al.* 2005:107). This means that the WCED and schools have to find innovative ways to bridge the gap between education and employment.

Schools should therefore work in partnership with the corporate sector and government departments to meet the needs of the workplace. Curriculum development should take cognisance of the needs of business corporations. In this regard I argue that creating learning organisations is more than just understanding the needs of schools in our society, but to integrate schools into society and thus become part of shaping that society.

Middlewood *et al.* (2005:103) note Goleman’s (1996) question: “What can we change that will help our children fare better in life?” They (2005:103) then posit that “there is growing evidence that the fundamental ethical stance in life stems from emotional capacities.” The question that now needs answering is what does emotional capacity had to do with creating a learning organisation? As mentioned previously, the fundamental purpose of a learning organisation is to provide effective and efficient teaching and learning. Simply put, this entails enabling teachers to provide quality teaching so that learners can obtain better results.

Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:5) state that “the school is where educational policy is put into practice.” Therefore if policies are unclear or irrelevant to the needs of teaching and learning, policies on classroom practice should be reviewed. Teachers

are the practitioners and are better able to understand the real needs of schools and learners, and should therefore be involved in the formulation of policy. Schools have over time developed their own set of processes. These processes are concerned with how teachers communicate, how they solve problems, make decisions and deal with students and their colleagues.

Creating learning organisations would mean that the WCED and its relevant partners need to develop a conceptual framework of a learning organisation that would meet the needs of quality education in the WCED. Creating this framework should support the transformation of schools in such a way that they clearly reflect the core culture of the communities. This is not an easy task and can only be adequately done if the real practitioners – namely the teachers – are involved in drawing up the framework that will be compatible with the needs of society. Teachers are involved in teaching and learning, so improvement must include teachers' involvement in the process.

2.3.7 Development of schools into learning organisations

To develop schools into learning organisations requires systemic change. This means being in constantly communication with the WCED, EMDCS and other role-players. The fundamental aim of schools is the development of mature, self-directed students by developing the students' life-long competence. To achieve this goal, schools have to change from institutions that transfer knowledge into learning organisations. A school cannot develop in isolation. Dalin *et al.* (1994:6) state that “school on its own is not capable of providing learning opportunities for students in modern society.” If schools are to develop into learning organisations, they need to develop within the context of the environment which will either constrain them or develop them professionally. I therefore propose a mode of communication that will result in an interconnected and interrelatedness of all role-players.

In support of this statement, Fullan (2003:13) posits that “teachers, administrators and policymakers alike must alter context (within the classroom, across the classroom within the school, and across schools) in order to reduce the gap between high and low performers.” This context, for schools in the Western Cape, I believe, refers to teaching and learning methodology, resources, classroom and school infrastructure,

safety and security and timely intervention from service providers, primarily the WCED.

Fullan (1993:43) implies that schools cannot transform without support from the community. Schools are becoming increasingly complex and managing a school requires combining forces with parents, communities and other relevant stakeholders. Fullan (2001:199) draws on Henry's (1996) conclusion that "Educators have to go out into their communities with empathy, and interact meaningfully with their constituents." This means that schools can no longer be isolated from the communities they serve, but have to reshape their involvement with parents and the community in order to tap into resources that have assets and expertise that are essential to the partnership.

If the WCED is to develop schools into learning organisations, they have to provide accountability, pressure, support and capacity building. However, Fullan (2001:232) cautions that providing all that is an extremely difficult task and that "no government has ever done it effectively." Therefore a mentoring programme aimed at motivating educators, schools and governing bodies to empower and develop themselves could be beneficial to the WCEDs objective to develop schools into learning organisations. Furthermore, formerly disadvantaged schools many which are dysfunctional are facing serious challenges. Turning these kinds of schools into learning organisations would require major innovative adjustments, new goals, new ways of getting things done and even new values and assumptions.

There must be a strong and committed interaction between the internal and external environment of schools. Molo (2005:4) contends that if a learning organisation wants to sustain its development, it has to maintain "a close relationship between the internal and external environment." especially within the context of a changing environment. Also, if schools focus only on their own internal organisation, they are depriving themselves of support that might be available outside.

Schools, parents and the community should collaborate and make a collective effort in supporting schools to make teaching and learning enjoyable and constructive for both teachers and learners. Schools should draw from their own and other people's

experience, and as a result deal flexibly and innovatively with the changing environments of modern society. They can creatively change to meet the customer's requirements, and can adapt and cope easily with these changing needs. If learning organisations keep in touch with the community, they will be able to deal with changes proactively.

As learning organisations interact with external variables, different interconnected layers are created in many ways. It is therefore difficult to refer to a learning organisation without referring to all the layers. Learning organisations constantly rely on the efforts of all individuals and groups at these different layers to improve everyday teaching and learning activities, communication, reflection and inquiry processes in the school.

Transformation (which refers to the improvement of teaching and learning) should occur on different levels, which include but are not limited to teaching, learning and administration. I argue that happy teachers are usually more productive teachers. Involving everyone concerned, especially teachers, in the decision-making process will ease the pursuit of excellence. Fullan (2001:115) supports this position by positing that “classroom and schools become effective when (1) quality people are recruited to teach, and (2) the workplace is organised to energise teachers and reward accomplishments.”

Teachers in South Africa are generally demoralised. Teachers are faced with many challenges and as a result cannot perform optimally. Statistics indicate that many teachers in South Africa take leave of absence due to stress or are leaving the system in massive numbers. Fullan (2001:21) concludes that “the biggest problems facing schools are fragmentation and overload.” This is endemic to the education system in the Western Cape with declining resources and expectations as well as a turbulent environment.

The main objective of a learning organisation and ultimately the WCED should be to develop effective classroom teaching. This objective in turn seems to be grounded in outcomes-based education (OBE) which aims to establish a balanced curriculum in eight learning areas. However, van Deventer and Waghid (2005:188) caution that

“there is a lot of evidence pointing to more challenges, not only with regard to implementation of outcomes-based education curricula in South Africa, but also to resistance from teachers and parents to changes in education.” This is already manifested in many schools that are experiencing difficulties in terms of implementing OBE due to a lack of resources and inadequate training to implement the new system.

Fundamental to a learning organisation is the development of a good and sustainable relationship between organisational structures (such as schools, community and parents) and provincial and national policy. This relationship should be aimed at creating a better chance of meeting the new conditions for a national and provincial productive education workforce as well as producing equilibrium to stabilise and produce a self-reinforcing social system that may be beneficial to all.

A research study done by Kohn (1999:96) found that “teachers who felt controlled became more controlling, removing virtually any opportunity for students to direct their own learning.” This essentially implies that dictating to schools what to do will create a sense of pressure to produce and when that happens, teachers in turn pressurise their students. This may result in a tense relationship that produces a ripple from teachers and learners, to teachers and heads of departments, to head of departments and principals, and ultimately to principals and the WCED. This kind of relationship is not beneficial for developing schools into learning organisations. In our current democratic dispensation, a more collaborative approach will avoid many negative outcomes in the WCED system.

2.3.8 Conceptual flaws in the idea of a learning organisation

So far, through a study of the literature, I have presented a very positive picture of a learning organisation. However, the analysis would be flawed if I ignore the conceptual flaws in the understanding of a learning organisation. Furthermore, the study of critical hermeneutics with its emancipatory approach compels me to look for such possible conceptual flaws in the understanding of a learning organisation. Organisational learning is problematic in the sense that it leads to the understanding that organisations are personified as having real existence, as in a human capacity.

This creates the understanding that a learning organisation is capable of learning. Furthermore, it creates the impression that individual learning is conceptually distinct from organisational learning. This in turn leads to the question of “the relationship between organisational learning and individual learning, which is flawed from the outset” (Hughes 2000:11).

Hughes (2000:9) highlights some conceptual limitations of Senge’s model of a learning organisation. Senge appears to be giving a learning organisation human characteristics (namely intelligence) when he argues that learning organisations have, “an existence beyond the level of the individuals who are the units of its constitution.” Through this line of thinking, Senge is suggesting that the individual contribution can never match up with the whole and thus, I believe, undermining the significance of individual contributions. Implying that a learning organisation has an existence beyond the human level suggests that a learning organisation has a life on its own, which is a highly problematic contention, according to Hughes (2000).

The conceptual challenge lies in the fact that Senge, throughout his exposition of a learning organisation, moves between the voluntarist (which refers to the use of or dependence on voluntary action to maintain an organisation, carry out a policy, or achieve an end) and the structural position (which refers to the attempt to analyse a specific field in an organisation as a complex system of interrelated parts). On the one hand, Senge claims that reality can be created (which is structuralist), while on the other hand, he claims that a learning organisation is a real entity with an existence greater than its members. Senge (2000) states that example exists where the intelligence of the team is above the intelligence of the individual in the team. This is a structuralist position. Furthermore, this may lead to the impression “that the mere act of will is enough to change fundamentally the organisation.” This position fails to recognise the significant impact of external variables that are beyond the control of the organisation.

The conceptual flaw lies in the fact that Senge gives the organisation life outside its members and implies that the organisation decides when and how to do things and not

the individuals that constitute the organisation. In other words Senge does not reflect on what the people in the organisation think, but what the organisation thinks.

2.4 THE MERITS OF PERSUING A LEARNING ORGANISATION

The question that now requires an answer is whether it is worth pursuing the notion of a learning organisation. In a dialogue with MacIntyre, Dunne argues that teaching is a “complex form of socially established cooperative human (action)” (MacIntyre & Dunne 2004:6). Policies and practice do not always work out as intended. Often the environment dictates the outcome of policies and at times it requires different interventions to those prescribed by policy. Policies should therefore create the necessary environment to achieve the required objective. If this environment is created, the WCED should be able to adjust its policy to meet the needs of those it serves. To adequately answer the question of whether it is worth pursuing a learning organisation, it may be necessary to go beyond the characteristics of a learning organisation as set out above, and also determine who the role-players are and to look at their individual contribution to the establishment of a learning organisation.

The role-players in the establishment of a learning organisation should include educators (including principals), schools (academic and non-academic staff), students, parents, service provider (WCED), school governing bodies, student representatives and representatives of the community. Learning organisations have a responsibility of inducting learners into their full social responsibility. To meet this objective it is imperative for schools to facilitate learning at all levels. In Chapter Three I shall individually expand on the significance of all the role-players and how they can contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations.

In answer to the question posed in this section I would argue that if proper consultation with relevant stakeholders is in place, schools can contribute significantly to the development of learners and the society at large and would then become a worthwhile enterprise.

2.5 CONSTITUTIVE MEANINGS OF A LEARNING ORGANISATION

The discussion is based on the premise that if schools are to become learning organisations, then it should be worth looking into the conditions that set into motion the environment to achieve such outcome. I argue that constitutive meanings can be used as a vehicle to create these conditions for developing learning organisations. In fact, attending to the feature of constitutive meanings would mean to underscore the notion or characteristics of a learning organisation.

In this study I draw on Fay's conceptualisation of constitutive meanings. Fay (1996:115) refers to constitutive meanings as "basic ideas or notions in terms of which the meaning of specific practices and schemes of activity must be analyzed." This implies that once constitutive meanings have been constructed, these meanings then form the basic ideas used to analyse specific practices. He concedes that interpreting actions, practices and cultural issues is a difficult and complicated endeavour, because meaning depends on the role it has in the system, which in itself is complex and dynamic.

Many schools in the Western Cape are operating under challenging circumstances. These challenges include high teacher-student ratios, poverty, illiteracy, low morale, disease and environmental degradation, which are all inextricably interconnected. Moreover, schools are complex, dynamic and widely distributed. To address such challenges, schools have to constantly focus on developmental and organisational improvement in order to keep up with the changing and competitive environment.

The aim of exploring constitutive meanings is to understand the underlying reason for a particular course of action. More specifically, it is to gain clarity about the conceptual understanding of learning organisations and how the WCED's service provision model aims to assist schools in developing into learning organisations. The construction of constitutive meanings will give me an indication of whether the WCED's service provision model is supportive in developing schools into learning organisations – in other words, to answer the question of this chapter: what constitutes a learning organisation? It is necessary to investigate how consistently the WCED is applying its policy to its service delivery model and how this application can

contribute to schools developing into learning organisations. Exploring constitutive meanings not only enables us to understand particular behaviour, but also why it exists.

In this inquiry, constitutive meanings exist to understand the WCED's conceptualisation of a learning organisation and how it relates to what literature understands it to be. Furthermore to highlight conceptual flaws that may exist within the WCEDs service provision model. In the case of the WCED a particular service provision model was adopted that focuses on providing to quality teaching for all learners. To achieve this objective the WCED appears to be following a managerialist approach to develop schools into learning organisations.

This assumption is based on the current service provision model that is focused mostly on standard performances with quality as its main assessment criteria. Also, the current function of curriculum advisors are mainly supporting and monitoring whether teachers are following the programme as set out by the WCED. Failing to do so would result in labelling schools as ineffective. This in turn result such schools being subjected to a team of investigators doing extensive intervention to get schools to comply with the WCEDs programme.

Thus, the objective of this inquiry is more than just to understand the service provision model of the WCED, but why it is providing that particular model and what it hopes to achieve. In this way the WCEDs service provision model can be conceptualised in a particular way. It is also necessary to look for possible unpredicted consequences that may arise from the WCEDs service provision model and policy documents and how it may impact on develop on the development of learners, teachers and the community at large.

Understanding how the WCED plans to transform schools into learning organisations would therefore require an understanding of the WCEDs official's views of a learning organisation as well as how the department coordinates its function to provide effective and efficient service delivery. Doing this would in turn require an understanding of people's perception of what makes up the WCED.

I contend that having an understanding of what policy says does not necessarily reflect the thinking of individuals within the WCED. Deeper interpretation is needed to look for conceptual flaws or inconsistencies between policy documents and practical implementation, and how these two may contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. To understand the education system in the Western Cape requires an understanding of school, EMDC and Head Office levels and how they are conceptually linked.

It is generally believed that learning organisations are successful schools which contain highly motivated and passionate teaching staff. Mloi (2005:7) reinforces this idea by stating that a learning organisation employs self-renewal strategies that enable schools to be more “effective and efficient.” They are organisations where the individual’s objectives are reconciled with the organisation’s objectives. Schools can be regarded as learning organisations when they take cognisance of both individuals and teams. Hargreaves and Fullan (1998:53) state that “If schools were learning organisations, they would constantly search for ideas, input and information about how to improve their practice and get better results over time.”

Mloi (2005:2) describes a learning organisation “as an organisation that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future and achieve what it truly desires.” Continual learning is therefore fundamental to a learning organisation. This affirms Argyris’s (1976) understanding that learning is a reflection of how people think. Creating learning in an organisation involves structures and strategies for learning. It involves creating a learning infrastructure and the competence and skill to use it.

A learning organisation also inspires its members to continue developing their personal skills and qualities so that the entire organisation benefits. It benefits not only from its own members, but also from others outside the organisation. These benefits include the expertise and talent that the organisation can draw from individual members in the organisation as well as information, expertise and material resources that can be drawn from parents and businesses in the community. To create a learning organisation – and to change the basic organisational culture to one of

learning together – therefore involves more than just taking a few initiatives or updating a few current practices.

We live in a dispensation where organisations always attempt to maximise the use of important resources. Therefore learning organisations always try to coordinate work in such a way that it encourages everyone to contribute their ideas and suggestions covering all parts of the organisation. Furthermore, one of the most important features of a learning organisation is to encourage the sharing of information between teachers through formal or informal channels to the enrichment of all involved. The foundation of a learning organisation is to enhance the capacity for perpetual learning, which implies developing “ways of experimenting with possible responses to the change and uncertainty.” (Moloi 2005:5).

It is important that the members of an organisation first reflect upon the organisation itself and seek to understand everything that is going on inside the organisation. Having done that, the organisation now looks beyond itself and benchmarks its progress against other organisations whose experience it seeks to emulate. Looking at the situation in many of the schools in the Western Cape, it appears that many schools still have not arrived at this junction and still need much intervention in order to provide quality education.

It is through expansion that external learning takes place. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:17) draw on Dalin & Rollf (1993:5), who claim that “an innovative school is a school that has learned how to learn.” Schools should create partnerships with businesses and community forums and thus create shared goals and a strong vision that are central to the needs and expectations of all concerned. At the heart of learning organisation’s capacity to develop are the individual and the collective learning of all its members. In this regard the establishment of a library or information centre is a positive sign that the school is interested in fostering knowledge development through information sharing.

Moloi (2005:2) refers to *The Harvard Business Review* (1991:20), which “sees a learning organisation as a group of people learning from the experience and best practices of others.” This means that those associated with a learning organisation

must be motivated, committed and dedicated to social and interpersonal communicative skills, while at the same time being capable of outstanding performance. Organisational learning is not a goal in itself, but relates to individuals' behaviour in the organisation, and the organisation's ability to effectively respond to the change in its environment. Struckman and Yammarino (2003:2) draw on Porras and Silvers (1991), who claim that research in organisational development is underdeveloped. Despite the volumes that have been written about organisational change, only "a part of reality of change" has been highlighted. Investigating a change process is therefore a complicated matter and careful consideration should be given to the methodological process.

Davidoff and Lazarus (1997: 35) state in support to this that a learning organisation is "an organisation which is constantly and systematically reflecting on its own practice, and making appropriate adjustments and changes as a result of new insights gained through that reflection." Therefore a learning organisation values learning from its mistakes as well as its successes. Learning organisations should possess transformational learning capabilities and not just reactive behaviour. Moloi (2005:9) identifies four levels of learning namely, "the individual, team, organisation, and societal levels." I will expound on these four levels later in this chapter.

As indicated in Chapter One, a clearer understanding of a learning organisation also requires an understanding of organisational learning. The concept of learning organisation is often confused with organisational learning. A learning organisation is not synonymous to organisational learning. In fact, organisational learning focuses on how learning takes place within an organisation. It centres on collective learning and specifically highlights Argyris's (1992) point that organisations do not perform the action that produce learning, but that the individual members of the organisation are responsible for learning, although it is the organisation that has to create favourable conditions for it.

Organisational learning concerns itself with the development of new knowledge or insight that has the potential to influence behaviour. Schools should be driven by the quest to gain knowledge and information and as such teachers should always be aware

of new information that emerges, assess its relevance and use innovative and creative methods to introduce it into their curriculum.

Many models have emerged that described different combinations of features that typify a learning organisation. Each model assumes that these features lead to improved teaching and learning performance. A review of the literature indicates that many models share many features that characterise a learning organisation. Drawing from the literature I shall next attempt to construct the constitutive meanings that represents the logical conditions for the existence of a learning organisation. These constitutive meanings will serve as conceptual lenses that will enable me to see whether the WCED is building upon the necessary logical conditions for transforming schools into learning organisations. The constitutive meaning becomes the necessary logical conditions for the existence of a learning organisation. Furthermore these constitutive meanings will then become my hermeneutical lenses for viewing and understanding whether the WCEDs service provision policies are compatible with the constitutive meanings and what impact these policies make towards assisting schools developing into learning organisations.

A learning organisation comprises many of elements. To remain within the scope of this inquiry, I shall construct five constitutive meanings based on the aspects highlighted in the literature. Through the literature review I listed the following features to help me construct the constitutive meanings: motivation, passion and commitment, expanding and enhancing capacity, continual learning, learning infrastructures, maximum resources, benchmarking, innovation, partnership, collective learning, communicative skills, outstanding performance and reflection.

The five constitutive meanings I construct (with their related concepts) are:

- Quality education (which includes aspects such as teaching and learning, motivation, passionate and committed staff, learning infrastructure, maximum resources, continual learning, outstanding performance, reflection and benchmarking);

- Inclusive education (which is associated with access, sharing, empathy, ethics, dissatisfaction and learning opportunities);
- Teamwork (which includes collaboration, partnership, sharing, involvement, and collective learning);
- Communication (which relates to effective and efficient service delivery, flow of information, and access to resources);
- Power (which can be associated with authority, consent, control, management, influence, hierarchy, and affiliation).

Many of these related concepts may overlap. However, I have clustered the above aspects into the five constitutive meanings that I found useful for investigating the service delivery model of the WCED. These five elements provide a critical hermeneutical lens to analyse whether the WCED's service delivery model is sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations.

2.5.1 Quality education

Quality teaching and learning have always been a concern and now enjoy even greater emphasis within the context of dynamic educational change in South Africa. The call is even more critical to demonstrate quality outcomes that benefit all learners. Quality of education to all is an important issue that the WCED is promulgating rigorously. Quality has always been defined in terms of standards of excellence and is a key concept in the development of teaching and learning. It has also been a matter of interest and concern to all involved in education. I argue that quality of teaching and learning may be regarded as the cornerstone of a learning organisation.

By looking at the current conditions of the quality of teaching and learning in Western Cape schools, the constitutive meaning of quality of learning will enable conceptual analysis of the service delivery model of the WCED. The quality of an educational institution is often described in terms of resources, infrastructure, teaching and learning outcomes. However important these elements may be, they do not necessarily provide an accurate account of the quality of teaching and learning or how a school operates.

Grisay and Mählck (1991:5) draw on Carron & Ta Ngoc (1980), who observe that “these measurements focus on formal rather than actual quality characteristics: a school can have highly qualified but not necessarily very motivated staff, whereas another can be poorly equipped and yet able to make good use of the few facilities it has.” This is an indication of the complexity of schools and also that quality of teaching and learning can better be analysed in terms of their context.

In some learning institutions the quality of teaching and learning is measured in terms of inspections. Often times quality teaching is based on the assumption that more inspection meant better quality. The reality indicates that quality becomes a compromise between the ever-increasing cost of inspection and consumer demand for better goods. Even though industry has moved back from this operation, it has still survived in education. Inspection with regards to teaching may not be as prevalent on EMDC level, but it is very much alive within schools.

For example grade 9 and 12 educators are in constant contact with curriculum advisors for moderation and support. These two groups receive particular focus because the grade nines exit the General Education Training (GET) while the grade twelve's exits the Further Education and Training programme. Educators teaching these two grades are expected to visit districts offices for moderation every term. Based on my experience as a teacher I argue that the application of inspection in its current and pass to education is thus inherently flawed. Often times this type of inspection in schools leads to window dressing. In all Western Cape schools, grade 9 & 10 educators are expected to submit an internal moderation report before attending the external moderation. The problem is that educators put most of their attention on these two grades while neglecting the other grades.

The quality of education should be measured in terms of the capacity at classroom level. Murphy (1997:35) draws on an assumption that “education problems are attributable more to the failure of the system of schooling than to the shortcoming of individual educators; empowerment (of students, teachers, and parents) is a more effective tool than prescription; and bottom-up, school-based solution strategies will lead to more satisfying results than will top-down, mandated ones.”

Considering the high student-teacher ratio in South African schools it is difficult to understand how quality education could be achieved. Morrow (2007:19) posits that “Large class teaching is thus defined as a degenerate version of teaching and, at the extreme, we might be unable to see it as ‘real’ teaching at all.” Other factors that may also impede the quality of education include, among other things, absenteeism, low morale of teachers, lack of resources and poor service delivery.

Individuals within organisations usually have their own expertise, methodology and body of knowledge that they bring to their institutions. Often they share this knowledge and experience with each other in an attempt to work more effectively and efficiently. As each member share their expertise and experiences, the whole organisation benefits. Harvey (1990:23) claims that “knowledge change is a result of praxis.” In other words, as people engage with information handed down to them and discover that it may not be appropriate for a particular environment, they transform or replace this information to suit their individual circumstances.

The call for quality education in the Western Cape appears to be prompted by the high level of unemployment among young people, the shortage of skills in the job market and the need for increased productivity in a highly competitive commercial market.

In a learning organisation there is always a flow of fresh ideas to meet the existing needs. When these ideas are shared, the quality of teaching and learning is more likely to be affected.

2.5.2 Inclusive Education

I constructed inclusive education as a constitutive meaning because of the constitutional obligation it implies. The aim is to critically review key educational policies against this constitutive meaning and to give an account of the effect of specific policies of inclusion. Furthermore, it highlights what mechanisms and strategies have been put in place to provide inclusive education and look for the policy gap that exists between intention and practice. There is a strong conceptual link between inclusion and exclusion and these two concepts can therefore be used in

combination. Soudien *et al.* (2004:23) suggest that the concepts “imply a juxtaposition in that social inclusion of certain persons or groups implies exclusion of others.” Thus the concept of inclusive education can be used to counter exclusivity. The space allocated for this issue may not adequately address this issue. I will nevertheless refer inclusive education within the confines of language, class, culture, race and disability.

My point of departure is that children who do not have access to quality education often come from families and communities that are characterised by poverty, unemployment and broken homes. I argue that this trend can only be reversed as children gain access to quality education. Social integration and assimilation are key issues that precede inclusive education. This section hopes to reconceptualise inclusive education within a wider social context in which poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion are seen as major obstacles to quality learning for all.

South Africa has a history of racial segregation and inequality that has largely impacted on the attainment of inclusive education. This has extended to the marginalisation of learners with disabilities in the education sector, which has not been completely addressed by the post-apartheid government. In defining inclusive education, I adopt O’Hanlon’s (2003:13) suggestion “that no child or young person should be excluded from mainstream schooling because of perceived learning differences, language, culture, racial, class, religious or behavioural differences.” After more than fourteen years into our democracy, South African learners with disabilities still have great difficulties gaining access to mainstream education.

The few schools with special needs that exist are limited to admitting learners according to rigidly applied categories. This state of affair confirms what Sayed *et al.* (2007:11) state: “While much of the work in the educational inclusion debate is cast within the framework of special needs education, there have also been significant theoretical inputs which have sought to place the issue of disability alongside other forms of oppression, in the human rights framework.” I argue that including disabled learners in mainstream education would involve huge financial implications with regards to school infrastructure, which I believe the WCED’s finances cannot absorb at this stage.

In terms of the White Paper on Education inclusion is about recognising and respecting the differences among all learners and building on the similarities. Inclusion is a national initiative aimed at supporting learners, teachers and the provincial education systems so that “the full range of learning needs can be met.” According to data released by Department of Education, (2003) the Education Management Information System (EMIS) there are 380 Special Schools with 64,603 learners. This makes up only 0.52% of the learners enrolled in South African schools. The Western Cape in particular has 82 Special Schools which accommodate 9,213 learners.

Developing Special Schools is a perpetuation of exclusive education. Soudien *et al.* (2004:26) argue that “Special education is seen as producing societal divides by separating ‘disabled’ persons from the rest of society and protecting such service from addressing the need for integration.” These special schools are also more costly to operate and unnecessary, since learning at these physically disabled institutions are significantly different from that of mainstream schools.

One of the main objectives of the WCED’s restructuring programme is to provide Quality education for all. However, looking at the above mentioned information it becomes clear that quality education is still not accessible to many learners and much is still required to make schools in the Western Cape more fully inclusive. Apart from the data mentioned above which relate to learners with disabilities or impairments, exclusion is now reinventing itself in terms of the admission of learners on the basis of their academic achievements, financial, sports and linguistic merits. This situation is especially prevalent in schools what are now known as former model C schools.

I argue that the South African government is to a large extent to be blamed for the reinvention of exclusion through their neoliberal approach to education, which resulted in fierce competition between schools. As Hargreaves and Fullen (1998:17) observed “Market competition, parental choice and individual self-management are redefining how schools relate to their wider environments.” School may operate under a formal inclusive policy, but subtly exclude learners for a number of reasons. Learners whose parents have the financial means can attend well-resourced and ‘successful’ schools.

Robertson and Hill (2001:75) argue that “The poor are increasingly forced into poor schools and subsequently into the low wage, temporary contract and alternative economies.” By limiting access to those who can afford quality education or who conform to certain criteria is an indictment to the WCED’s objective of quality education for all.

Soudien *et al.* (2004:82) argue that “equity and redress in schooling now play themselves out primarily through school choice and admission process within parameters set up through policy-led restructuring of the school system.” Many disadvantaged groups including the poor and linguistic and ethnic minorities are still marginalised as a result of the admission criteria. Even though admission based on racial discrimination has been largely eradicated, other forms of exclusion are still a prevailing concern and it appears that the state cannot adequately deal with this issue. O’Hanlon (2003:10) draws on (Dyson 1999) who posits that “within a discourse of ethics, ‘maintaining segregated special education is incompatible with the establishment of an equitable education system and hence ultimately with an equitable society. It follows therefore that only inclusive education can deliver social justice.” In terms of the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), the South African government and ultimately the WCED have a constitutional obligation to promote democratic values based on equality and freedom for their learners.

The implication of inclusive education is far reaching. It affects basic human rights in a number of ways, for example, employment, transportation, social security, housing, local amenities and sporting facilities. Even though policy does exist with regards to inclusive education, it appears that the WCED has not found an effective way to deal with the exclusion of learners. To tackle the issue of inclusive education, the WCED needs to look carefully at every aspect of schooling and the social context in which it is found. This holistic approach is a long-term solution and no quick-fix solution should be considered.

A move towards more inclusive education would mean schools will have to change and become more responsive to the needs of the entire community as well as to those

of the individual. This would require a change in teaching methodologies to accommodate those with physical as well as learning disabilities.

2.5.3 Collaborative Teamwork

Teamwork may provide an excellent opportunity to give a voice to all those involved in teaching and learning. It is the place where concerns and failures are discussed and shared on the understanding of getting help and support. Schools and teachers are generally characterised as working in isolation. Teachers should therefore be encouraged to work in teams and learn to engage constructively with other team members. Senge (1990:10) considers teamwork to be a “fundamental learning unit in modern organisations.”

Teamwork is seen as a fundamental learning unit based on the belief that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Within the context of the teamwork, individual members interact with each other to integrate information from different perspectives into a new collective perspective. Learning organisations cannot develop effectively without strong leadership and teamwork.

To tap into the valuable source of ideas, initiative and innovations, schools as learning organisations should encourage educators to work in groups, where more wisdom abounds. Group work will also provide a sense of purpose and a shared vision as members collaborate towards achieving a common set of goals. Collaborative development flourishes as organisations invest in their human resources and thus increase their stock of knowledge as people combine and expand their knowledge and expertise to the benefit of both them and the organisation they serve.

Collaborative learning and problem-solving, especially in team work, can form an important strategy in collaborative development. When people work in collaboration with others, they usually “position themselves in relation to other people” and in so doing form a “school community” (Busher 2006:7). A learning culture requires reflective teaching and peer-group discussion. In this regard sufficient time should be

allocated to learning. All collaborative ventures should be based on consensus, cooperation, commitment and a shared view of objectives.

Strong collaborative relationships should develop in and between teams as they focus on achieving common goals and objectives in their quest to provide quality education. Successful the collaboration, the greater the likelihood that shared decision making and consensus building will be established within groups. All participants should be encouraged to explore new and innovative ways of improving teaching and learning outcomes.

Hargreaves (1994:251) argues that “Collaborative working relationships are at the core of the restructuring agenda and all its contradictory possibilities.” A learning organisation should create an environment where team performance flourishes and develops optimally. The aim of these teams is to perform efficiently for the organisation to produce positive results. Understanding the purpose and process of development facilitates willingness to accept responsibility and accountability for establishing and supporting learning processes and learning outcomes.

The underlying aim for collaborative teamwork should be to improve classroom practice. Yet, as Creese (2005:2) notes, “little research has been done to how teaching partnership change the traditional classroom context as we know it.” Collaborative partnership in the case of the WCED should operate on three different levels, namely school, EMDC and Head Office. This collaborative relationship can be very complex and should therefore be constantly developed. Chapter Four provides a brief account of the collaborative relationship between the WCED, ENDC and schools and how this relationship impacts on classroom practice.

Senge (1990:10) refers to teamwork as a collective development when he says that “We know that teams can learn, in the performing arts, in science, and even, occasionally, in business, there are striking examples where the intelligence of the team exceeds the intelligence of the individuals in the team and where teams develop extraordinary capacities for co-ordinated action. When teams are truly learning, not only are they producing extraordinary results but the individual members are growing

more rapidly than could have occurred otherwise.” In this sense the idea of developing a learning organisation involves collaboration.

I argue that if schools are to develop into learning organisations, collaborative teamwork should exist on all three levels of the WCED. These include collaborative relationships between Head Office and school, Head Office and EMDCs and MFTs, schools and EMDCs and MFTs and, importantly, collaboration between teachers in different subjects within a particular school. In the following chapter I examine what collaborative relationships with EMDCs can offer teachers through the service delivery model of the WCED and what impact this can have on teaching and learning.

Every team is composed of highly specialised members who are aware of their inability to know everything about their job. Because of this realisation, team members allow their information and knowledge to be shared freely, creating productivity and team building to strengthen the entire organisation. It creates a situation where each individual member can learn effectively, while at the same time the whole organisation benefits. Collaborative working relationships should be at the core of developing learning organisations.

All members are appreciated for their efforts, skills and values, and all opinions are treated equally and with respect. This not only develops a sense of camaraderie and creativity, but also increases the value of team members’ opinions. It also increases creativity within the organisation and allows for new ideas to flourish. A key factor in teamwork is the interpreting of information and diagnosing of problems. All members embrace the understanding that wisdom can be found in the counsel of many, which eventually increases job satisfaction.

It creates awareness that each team member is dependent on the others for the completion and success of their efforts. Through this awareness improved relationships are forged in and between team members. It will also encourage people to try out new ideas without having to worry about failure. It also enables people to know more about each other’s roles, needs, and shortcomings, thus allowing better use of resources, time and planning. This in turn will bring about improved techniques, methods and technology. Innovative and creative interaction within a learning

organisation allows schools to adapt to changes within their communities, demands from the WCED and competition.

Collaborative team work develops knowledge effectively that can be used within the organisation. Flexibility allows people to interact and work more freely within the organisation and breaks down rigid forms of hierarchy and protocol. Collaborative team work within an organisation enables higher productivity in and between teams and allows building on each other's strengths.

I argue that team work as a means of collaborative development, in combination with effective and efficient service delivery, could theoretically provide a useful framework for understanding how to create a learning organisation. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991:30) caution that "ignoring or riding roughshod over teacher's purposes can produce resistance and resentment." Therefore teachers should be recognised as key role players in the education system. Despite the unequal but equitable distribution of resources, it is clear from the literature that the undermining of any minority stake-holder could negatively affect the development of a learning organisation. All role-players are inter-connected and inter-dependent and should therefore receive due recognition.

Becoming a learning organisation will not necessarily guarantee a prosperous future of a school, but will maximise capacity and the use of resources, thus providing a motivated environment for continued existence. Schools should understand that they are part of a whole. It is through using information from the larger (external) community that a learning organisation grows towards becoming part of the whole community

Schools are confronted with large-scale learning issues and challenges to compete in a knowledge-driven society. Senge *et al.* (2005:11) posit that "All learning is about how we interact in the world and the type of capacities that develop from our interaction." Hence learning organisations have developed the capacity to learn, while continuously reflecting on what approaches are working and why – and then using these insights to guide future action.

Implementation of educational change involves change in practice. This means that information should be continuously imported and exported across system boundaries. This will effect constant change. Organisational learning and knowledge management are important for a complex system (such as schools) to change.

The school is a place where national and provincial educational policies and plans are put into practice. Teachers play a key role as implementers of policy and educational agendas. Therefore teachers become important agents who are instrumental in translating policies into practice. If teachers resist policies, no matter how effective they may appear, it will be difficult to turn them into practice. Team work as a constitutive meaning can be use as a benchmark to evaluate the WCED service delivery model and how a collaborative relationship may contribute toward schools becoming learning organisations. In conclusion, I would argue that team work is an effective way to share resources, improve teaching methodology, share ideas and provide support in an attempt to provide quality education where the learner becomes the primary beneficiary.

2.5.4 Communication

Turning schools into learning organisations will lead to considerable demands being made on all educational stakeholders in the WCED and place a deal of strain on the need to ensure teacher commitment. The WCED is seeking teacher commitment through a number of human resource and quality initiatives. I believe that one of these means should be effective communication. A high level of communication may help promote and manage teacher commitment for quality education. In order to reconcile the need to achieve quality education for all in an environment of declining resources, it will be necessary to secure increased commitment from all in the education sector. This I believe may better be achieved through effective communication with all stakeholders in the education system.

The many policies introduced over a short space of time, high pupil/teacher ratios, poor infrastructure coupled with the decline of resources mean that consultation and communication between teachers has become indispensable. The same can be said for the different levels in the education sector. South African teachers tend to work in

isolation. What is proposed is constant communication amongst teachers with regards to using resources. This could greatly reduce conflict amongst staff. I argue that there is a conceptual link between communication and commitment.

If teachers are committed to their task, they will do whatever it takes to ensure quality and effective education. Without commitment, quality education could be significantly reduced. Commitment is complex; however, because it is voluntary it can be withdrawn at any given time. Therefore constant communication may provide an indication of the level of a teacher's commitment.

I now want to extend the notion of communication and suggest that it can be advanced through deliberative democracy which enables preferences and beliefs to be aired, refined and transformed through systemic discursive interaction with others (Fitzpatrick 2008). Offering an explanation on deliberative democracy is not an easy matter. Elster (1998:8) separates the two concepts when referring to democracy as a process of "collective decision making with the participation of all who will be affected by the decision or their representatives" and deliberation as "decision making by means of arguments offered by and to participants who are committed to the values of rationality and impartiality." Furthermore, Gutmann and Thompson (2004: 7) define deliberative democracy as "a form of government in which free and equal citizens (and their representatives), justify decisions in a process in which they give one another reasons that are mutually acceptable and generally accessible, with the aim of reaching conclusions that are binding in the present on all citizens but open to challenge in the future." This implies that deliberative democracy provide broad participation that may legitimise a process so that the outcome or decision is likely to be respected regardless of who it favours.

A deliberative democracy has the objective of providing a shared commitment to problem solving through collective reasoning. Waghid (referring to Cooke 2000) views deliberative democracy as conception of conversation (which I call communication) that secures a central place for reasoned discussion. For Gutmann and Thompson (1996:1) (in Waghid 2004) a deliberative democratic theory offers a conception of inquiry that secures a central place for discussion in political life. Gutman and Thompson argue that the promise of a deliberative theory lies in a

concern for “finding terms of cooperation that each citizen can accept” for the reason that contemporary societies are driven by deep conflict and moral disagreement.

Benhabib (1996:68) (in Waghid 2004) explains deliberative theory as “a model for organizing the collective and public exercise of power in the major institutions of a society on the basis of the principle that decisions affecting the well-being of a collectivity can be viewed as the outcome of a procedure of free and reasoned deliberation among individuals considered as moral and political equals”. Bohman (in Waghid 2004) , another contemporary defender of deliberative theory, posits that (t)he deliberation of citizens is necessary if decisions are not to be merely imposed upon them ... consent, is after all, the main feature of democracy. Waghid argues that decision-making is legitimate insofar as policies are produced in a process of public discussion and debate, that is, deliberation, in which citizens and their representatives, going beyond mere self-interest and limited points of view, reflect on the general interest or on their common good.

Communication is integrally linked to Habermas’ notion of communicative rationality which further expands into collaboration and inclusivity. Habermas (1996:118) argues that “In communicative action, participants are not primarily oriented towards their own individual successes; they pursue their individual goals on condition that they can harmonize their plans of action on the basis of common situation definitions.” This means that effective communication is not just geared towards extending beyond just understanding but move towards agreement and validity which is at the heart of democracy. Furthermore, communicative action as reflected in the Habermasian notion implies that a plan of action be constructed in such a way that consensus is reached by all those involved in the education process.

The constitutive meaning of communication or what Habermas refer to as communicative rationality (reasoned, reflexive discussion) has a significant link with the notion of liberation or “unhindered communicative freedom” (Waghid 2006:33). He further (2006:33) allude to the understanding that if the notion of communicative rationality is fully integrated it would mean all educational stakeholders be included in the deliberation of educational matters that affect them. An inclusion of all stakeholders could significantly contribute to quality education and ultimately to the

development of schools into learning organisations. A lack of broad communication may hinder the notion of “intersubjective relationship” that would enable critical reflection (Habermas 1998:186) Communication that involve a larger spectrum of stakeholders also enables broader scrutiny and better validity.

Complete consensus may never be reached regardless of the process or paradigm one uses. However, effective communication could nevertheless pre-empt criticism, and may also lead to critical engagement, reflection and ultimately establish better responds and participation from stakeholders. Waghid (2006:33) draws on Benhabib (1996) who argues that effective communication is a “necessary condition for attaining legitimacy and rationality with regards to collective decision-making processes”. In other words effective communication set in motion a process of participation and ownership. To reiterate this point, van Wyk (2006:193) draws on the Habermasian notion of communication that implies that “consensual decision-making and participatory democracy are needed for educational transformation”. This allude to the notion that understanding and acceptance forms the basis of effective communication that could be use as a constitutive meaning to obtain the objective to develop schools into a learning organisation.

I argue that participatory democracy may be most justifiable notion for educational transformation that may ultimately lead to the transformation of schools into learning organisation. Through the inclusion of communication between all three tiers of the education system, a structure could be put in place in reaching an understanding between all relevant stakeholders on what strategies could best contribute towards quality education that could ultimately lead to schools becoming learning organisations.

When authorising information to different level of the educational bureaucracy, the message structure and communication flow are essential. Language is a means of communication which is “composed of symbols and the rules that permit us to combine these symbols in different ways” (Nachmias & Nachmias 2008:24). Here he refers to symbols as concepts. One of the most fundamental aspects of any organisation is communication. Language is an important tool for communication; as a result it therefore also becomes the tool that holds all departments together.

However, communication extends beyond the mere exchange of words and becomes an arrangement for exchanging information and experiences.

Taylor (1985:35) notes that language and social practice are inseparable because “The language is constitutive of the reality, is essential to its being the kind of reality it is. To separate the two ... is forever to miss the point.” Language as a means of communication is important for meaningful human interaction. The question then arises: what is constitutive meaning? Fay (1996:115) points out that “The interpretation of the meanings of actions, practices, and cultural objects is an extremely difficult and complicated enterprise ... the meaning of something depends upon the role it has in the system of which it is part.” This means that adherence to policy and information is interpreted based on the understanding of the context.

Developing schools into learning organisations is a daunting task. However, there are certain fundamental variables to be considered. These include knowing what you want to achieve, knowing what resources are available and the alternative courses of action available. In all these, effective communication between all levels of the education sector is crucial in providing quality education for all. I have no doubt that schools are more likely to develop into learning organisations if there is constant communication between schools and their service providers, which will result in strong support from the WCED through their respective EMDCs.

Furthermore I argue that the WCED has the potential of providing schools with significant flexibility in fulfilling their goal of achieving learning organisation (article 21) status. However, it would be naïve to suggest that the WCED’s efforts alone would be sufficient to turn schools into learning organisations. With effective communication on all levels of the education system, a higher degree of involvement of all stakeholders is more likely to follow and therefore relate to effective service delivery that will result in a better quality of teaching and learning.

The WCED approach to restructuring its service delivery model is to coordinate the services of all departments in an effort to reduce duplication and to provide effective and efficient communication between the various departments. This may have a significant impact on service delivery. For this to be successful, effective and constant

communication is necessary in and between the various departments within the WCED. Communication is vital for producing quality education.

Without communication, managers do not know what teachers want, nor do teachers know what the WCED can provide. Without communication, teachers do not know what the main focus of the school is or why. From the literature, especially the work of Dalin (1978:65), it becomes clear that change and “fundamental restructuring will not occur in response to outcries against inadequacies of the present system or according to elite blueprints for change.” Restructuring is more likely to happen with effective communication of all role players that will bring about a higher degree of participation. Effective communication may also lead to better use of, and/or reduction in conflict about, resources which may eventually enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

2.5.5 Power

Where two or more individuals come together, potential power exists to be used or abused. Education in particular is subjected to different levels of control and influence. Lynch and Lodge (2002:166) argue that “Educational policies and innovations are established by state bodies and are subject to the influence of other powerful stakeholders.” This implies that the position you hold within an organisation will determine the amount of power you can exercise. Bourdieu and de Saint Martin (1998:264) argue that power is a force that is structurally determined by the state and is also “a field of power struggles among the holders of different forms of power ... in which those agents and institutions possessing enough specific capital ... are able to occupy the dominant position.” Power manifests itself in different ways and on different levels. We all have an amount of power. The power to dictate to others, or the power to allow others to dictate to us.

Busher (2006:34) draws on Luke (1974), who views power as “the means not only by which people assert their preferred values and choices over those of other people, but also the means by which they prevent other people making choices or, indeed, challenge the choices that have already been implemented, perhaps by controlling the agenda for discussion.” Power is usually accessible to individuals in higher positions

in the hierarchy. The higher up you are in the hierarchical level, the easier it becomes to push your agenda or pursue private goals.

Often policy reflects the interests of those in top positions or the political affiliation rather than of the clients. Hargreaves and Fullan (1998:47) argue that “Power and politics are inescapable realities of school life”. This means that the entire education system, from head office to EMDCs to schools, hierarchical structures is deeply imbedded in the day to day operation of schooling. Because of this situation I shall do a policy analysis that is aimed at finding out who the main beneficiaries of these policies are and, if necessary, point out where policy fails to address the needs of schools.

Power is commonly associated with observing how two or more human agents exert or attempt to exert influence and in what ways, and to what extent their actions impact on others. If one agent succeeds in getting the other to do something that he/she would not otherwise do, then that is seen as an exercise of power. Harvey (1990:53) draws on Mill’s (1956) definition in which he claims that “By the powerful we mean, of course, those who are able to realise their will, even if others resist it.” Power usually manifests itself on all levels of the education sector. However, my exploration focuses mainly on policy documents and seeks to understand how institutional power (WCED) can be used to empower the masses, which includes teachers and students. Busher (2006:34) argues that “Power cannot be projected successfully unless those being led give their consent, whether that is derived willingly or by coercion.” It is in this context that we understand the impact of power. I will later argue how power can assist or impede schools in developing into learning organisations.

If utilised properly, power can be used to support and advance the quality of education. Murphy (1997:41) in citing Sabatini (1993:8) argues that “Power transformation through collaborative decision making requires more than will. It requires continuing negotiation, skill, and knowledge to make institutional change and ...we are unschooled in ways to do this.” If power is fairly distributed between managers, professionals and practitioners between the various levels of the education system, it may fundamentally impact on the quality of education. Teachers are exercising conscious and unconscious power in their daily interaction with their learners, schools

or the education system in which they work. This occurs when teachers are controlling or manipulating classroom practice or deliberately refusing to implement policies presented to them.

Creese (2005: 27) in citing Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester (2000:100) sums this up by saying “In looking at the ways in which power is constructed through language and in interaction, actors can begin to see themselves as agents who have the power to transform practice and not merely as recipients of already decided upon norms.” This holds true for the WCED’s policy makers and practitioners, especially with regards to the implementation of educational policies where teachers become the agents to promote policies. If policy does not reflect the individual needs of schools, teachers can simply refuse to implement it in their practice.

The above-mentioned five constitutive meanings can be used to critically analyse whether the WCED’s service delivery model is sufficient to turn schools into learning organisations. The aim now is to look at the WCED’s service delivery policy documents and ascertain if and how they support the five constitutive meanings as discussed in this chapter.

In this section I have constructed five constitutive meanings of a learning organisation through a study of the literature. These constitutive meanings I have derived from the literature and found that the absence of any one of these meanings may significantly reduce the development of a learning organisation. These constitutive elements underwrite the policy that supports a learning organisation. It is in the light of these constitutive meanings that I shall investigate the WCED’s service provision to schools to see if this is in line with its objective to develop schools into learning organisations.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter explored the facets which constitute a learning organisation. Through the literature I have constructed five constitutive meanings that are closely associated with a learning organisation. These constitutive meanings make learning organisations what they are and any attempt to develop schools into learning organisations entails having to integrate these constitutive meanings. Furthermore, these constitutive

meanings create the necessary conditions under which schools can become learning organisations. Through the exploration of the concept of a learning organisation, it became clear that its characteristics benefit not only schools and learners, but also society as a whole. It is thus consistent to argue that constituting a learning organisation is a worthwhile practice.

Throughout this inquiry it became clear that developing schools into learning organisations is possible, but I argue that this requires a process that can be put into motion by the five constitutive meanings I have constructed. Through exploring the literature it became clear that focusing on only one or certain aspects for improving the quality of teaching and learning is less likely to have a significant impact on the overall quality of education or the development of schools into learning organisations. A set of integrated actions should be put in place that must be coordinated at all three levels at the same time. The chapter further emphasises that learning organisations can only exist in a holistic paradigm based on deliberative democracy which I advanced through communication.

Through exploring the literature it also became notable that schools are organic structures within themselves and require more than improved material resources to become learning organisations; what is necessary is rather commitment, innovation, corporate thinking and consistent proactive collaboration. It is misleading to assume that a learning organisation can be established through better resources only or without effective partnership and the collaborative contribution of all role-players as mentioned in this chapter.

It is equally important to understand that the exclusion of any member of these role-players can derail the development of a learning organisation. The professional engagement of all role-players in combination with the five constitutive meanings with its foundation on communication creates a platform for developing a learning organisation that can also significantly alter the culture of schools.

After investigating the literature I constructed the following constitutive meanings that may contribute towards the establishment of a learning organisation (and by the same token, their absence may hinder this process):

- Quality of teaching and learning is a key element in a learning organisation in order to make knowledge available to everybody;
- Quality education for all is one of the cornerstones of the concept of inclusive education that is enshrined in the South African Schools Act of 1996;
- Teamwork is an inclusive and social activity and as such should be an active and energising experience. It enables people to take an active, reflective and collaborative approach towards teaching and learning;
- To improve service delivery only as an attempt to turn schools into learning organisations is insufficient. Communication between the WCED, EMDCs and schools is of the utmost importance. Only when this is in place, should other contributing factors be taken into consideration, which includes culture, ways of thinking, and the historical and environmental circumstances that complicate and slow the pace of development or change;
- The way power is played out within the education system will make or break the WCED's service delivery model and ultimately the development of schools into learning organisations in the Western Cape.

On the basis of the literature, I argue that any transformation based on only one organisational development variable without due consideration of other internal or external variables is unlikely to develop schools into learning organisations. To the question of whether it is worth pursuing the cultivation of a learning organisation, the answer is yes. The literature overwhelmingly indicates that a learning organisation “can be understood as a vision for excellence” and tends to have significant positive effects on both the organisation as well as the individual. (Moloi 2005:12).

In conclusion, I argue, on the basis of the literature, that learning organisations tend to contribute towards a positive social order that enables people to proactively and continually expand their capacity through critically reflecting on their practice, and then when necessary they find it easy to adapt to changes. With all these positive elements as well as the prospect of developing new knowledge, there can be very little doubt as to whether or not it is worth pursuing the goal of cultivating schools as learning organisations.

CHAPTER 3

AN ANALYSIS OF THE WCED'S SERVICE DELIVERY POLICIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses three service delivery policy documents against the five constitutive meanings, namely, quality education, inclusive education, collaborative teamwork, communication and power. Furthermore, it attempts to understand how these policies are aligned with the needs of schools as well as the WCED's objective of contributing towards schools becoming learning organisations. Bloch (2009:90) poses a fundamental question when he asked "are policies appropriate and do they help support teachers so that they can be better in their primary task to ensure teaching and learning." In this analysis I specifically focus on key concepts within the policies. These key concepts within the policies will enable me to understand the underlying goals and anticipated outcomes as well as the values and vision that underpin these policies. Yet at the same time I am mindful that policies do not always work out as anticipated. External variables and the institutional culture sometimes significantly influence the anticipated outcomes. The chapter also looks at various role players in the education sector and their respective contributions toward developing schools into learning organisations.

The South African education system operates in a specific economic environment. In other words, within an environment of scarce resources especially in most former disadvantaged schools. This means that the education system is mainly dependent upon resources whether they are human, economic or natural. Hence, I shall also look at how key resources like finance, human resources and service strategies are used to attain the intended outcomes and what arrangements are put in place for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing policies. I shall focus on the WCED service provision policies with regards to assistance to circuit teams, EMDCs and schools. Specifically, I shall explore how policies contribute towards or impede the development of schools

into learning organisations. But the possible “gap that exists between policy and practice” (Sayed *et al.* 2007:85) should always be borne in mind.

The WCED is responsible for formulating and maintaining education policies in the Western Cape Province. This chapter attempts to explain how the practice on institutional level maps onto policies. This will be done by giving a detailed exposition on relevant WCEDs policy documents with regards to its service provision model and to what extent policy and practice contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. I shall specifically look at the macro and micro developing structures and how they best serve the main service beneficiaries, the learners. The reason for exploring the macro and micro structure is to highlight the policy pathway through which some of these policies have developed. By pathway I mean whether these policies have been developed in response to the needs of the National Education Department.

Macro development pertains to national policy provision, while micro development refers to provincial development strategies. To remain within the scope of this inquiry I shall focus mainly on the *Human Capital Development Strategy* (HCDS) that the WCED adopted as a basis for restructuring Western Cape education service delivery. Other policies that I shall look at include: *Aspect of Time* and the *Service Delivery Charter*. I shall analyse these policies in terms of the five constitutive meanings.

Lewis (2006:35) highlights four key strands in the WCED’s restructuring programme. The first is to provide appropriate skills for the labour market, then to find ways to retain learners in school to complete Grade 12. Secondly, this will be done through the reduction of fees or elimination of school fees, free learner transport and textbooks, school feeding programmes and provision of adequate school infrastructure. Thirdly, the aim is to provide quality education through teacher development. The fourth and final strand is to improve sector-wide management systems which include monitoring and evaluation systems, systemic evaluation and whole school development. All four strands fall within the scope of the Human Capital Development Strategy (HCDS), which addresses the very foundation of what a learning organisation is. I shall provide a more detailed exploration later in this chapter.

3.2 POLICY GOALS

The guiding principle of all WCED policies is to promote quality service in adherence to the *Batho Pele White Paper* (No. 1459 of 1997), Principle 2, the Public Service Regulations (C1 & 2, No. 20117, July 1999), *Public Finance Management Act* (PFMA) (No. 1 of 1999) and the *Promotion of Administrative Justice Act* (No. 3 of 2000) as a regulatory framework. As a service delivery provider, the WCED has adopted the following models: Service Delivery Improvement Programme (SDIP) aimed at focusing on the Service Delivery Charter, Inclusive Service Standard, Training and Development in terms of Service Standards and Service Culture, and Monitoring and Evaluation. All these models will be dealt with in more detail later. All the above-mentioned policies are summed up under the three main policies that I will investigate namely:

- Service Delivery Charter;
- Human Capital Development Strategy; and
- Aspect of Time.

I shall now analyse the policies that deal mainly with the service delivery model of the WCED. To this end I shall use conceptual analysis to explore how the five constitutive meanings are manifested in these policies, and how these policies contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations.

3.3 FACTORS THAT CRITICALLY AFFECT THE POLICY OUTCOME

When policy is implemented there are always factors influencing it. The unintended outcomes of some policies sometimes negatively impact on certain individuals, groups and services within the education system, because it did not consider the unique culture of particular schools or because the participation of important stakeholders has been overlooked. In such cases schools or teachers may implement parts of the policies that they deem necessary and thus these policies sometimes becomes diluted as they are put into practice. I believe that a gap between policy and practice arises sometimes because of a lack of proper consultation, lack of understanding, their irrelevance to the particular needs of schools, or simply because

of teachers' resistance to change. I argue that if policies are constructed in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and properly implemented, they could have a significant impact on education and can therefore be considered the cornerstone of effective and efficient service delivery and ultimately the development of quality education.

In analysing the WCED's policy documents, I shall look carefully at how these policies impact on the service provision and classroom practice at schools and to what extent policy implementation has been diluted or has simply disappeared. The latter point refers to local schools where resistance is experienced and the policy is simply not implemented. I shall also consider the relevance of these policies to the unique environment that schools find themselves in. I argue that policy is central to education and should therefore adopt a logical, structured, integrated and comprehensive approach to the needs of schools, but also be based on sound theoretical principles. We should also be aware of the unintended consequences of policies, especially with regard to the support or impediments stemming from value systems and moral beliefs.

In a WCED Report (2000(a):60) Education Minister Pandor postulates that "much of the debate has focused on the massive challenge of reorganising and reshaping the administration of education, on developing a policy framework that is complementary to the democratising society, and on identifying critical elements that should make up the core curriculum in schools." To what extent this framework has been developed remains to be seen. Hence the WCED's policy framework will come under careful scrutiny to ascertain its usefulness.

According to the newly redesigned process, the WCED will operate its service delivery model under the following three structures: Circuit Teams, Districts and Head Office. These structures were established in an attempt to ensure effective and efficient service delivery to schools. The process involved 700 WCED employees, who include principals, educators, school governing bodies, RCLs, unions and FET CEOs.

In its Service Delivery Improvement Programme (SDIP) the WCED has undertaken to remove inefficient processes, delays and duplication, and unnecessary wastage that

hinder quality service delivery and prevent satisfying the needs of the people. Developing schools into learning organisations in the Western Cape will present new challenges as well as opportunities for both the WCED and schools. Since the demise of the apartheid education system, many reform initiatives have been introduced. To what extent these initiatives were actually implemented in the classroom remains to be seen.

Organisational restructuring and participatory management may enable the WCED and EMDCs to move beyond the narrow functionalist perspectives and create new roles and opportunities. By functionalist I mean perceiving education as a means to produce skilled workers, which in turn assumes that providing sufficient resources and services would produce quality education. If the WCED is to develop schools into learning organisations, it has to extend involvement to all those concerned, namely school staff, students, parents and community representatives, in the decision-making process. Furthermore recognition of the interrelationships and interdependencies of all stakeholders in the education sector in the Western Cape could contribute to the development of schools into learning organisations.

If the WCED hopes to succeed in developing schools into learning organisations, it should focus on increasing the level of student improvement. This would mean that greater consideration of quality teaching and learning need to be at the centre of its deliberations. Morrow (2007:28) posits that “a large part of the remedy is going to be professional.” This means all role players, especially practitioners, need to become actively involved in achieving professional outcomes. Furthermore, if quality teaching is to be achieved, the WCED has to give increased attention to instructional reform through professional development.

A restructuring process of this nature may take a long time. As Clarke (2001:8) observed, “It is about a sustained effort over months and years which consists of many different actions. It requires the active participation of all the staff and the commitment to making the required changes. It is unlikely at the start of the process that you will know all the steps, detailed actions and outcomes that need to be achieved.” Therefore if the development focuses on quality teaching and learning,

with the main focus on learners as the main service beneficiaries, the process may have better support and may then have a better chance of success.

It should also be noted that an improved service delivery model in itself, however relevant it may be, is not sufficient to turn schools into becoming learning organisations. Developing schools into learning organisations requires time and inclusive and collaborative participation, with no guarantee of immediate success. Therefore I argue that any developmental attempt should be an ongoing process.

Some of the principal challenges facing schools in the Western Cape include:

- Major retraining of teachers and administrators to understand the new approach to support learning and teach new skills and attitudes to learners;
- New relationships between administrators, teachers, learners, parents and EMDCs which seek to empower rather than dictating stakeholders in the learning process. By dictating I mean telling teachers what to do and hold them accountable for it;
- Lack of shared vision from national level to provinces and from provinces to EMDCs, schools and classroom level.

I have no doubt that the WCED and EMDCs have a significant role to play in supporting schools to develop into learning organisations. I now present the following arguments to support my view. Firstly, I argue that the main ways in which the WCED can help improve the quality of education are: setting realistic standards, supporting inputs known to improve achievement, adopting flexible strategies for the acquisition and use of inputs, and mentoring (rather than monitoring) performance. There is a distinct difference between mentoring and monitoring. Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995:182) refer to mentoring as a hierarchical guidance process: “its major goal is the beginner’s effective job performance and smooth socialisation into the culture of the workplace.” It’s a process in which you assist a beginner to become a more efficient worker. Monitoring, on the other hand, carefully checks whether a task has been completed successfully. Monitoring is more task-based whereas mentoring is focused on the individual’s need.

Realistic standards can be set through close consultations with teachers and schools who know the needs and challenges of their schools. If schools, teachers and learners

are involved in setting school standards, they become part of the decision making and own the process. A one-size-fits-all approach is not the best way to set standards, because each school has a unique culture and operates under different environments. Therefore flexibility with regards to creating standards and service delivery intervention may greatly contribute to successful implementation of appropriate standards.

Secondly, I argue that it is a misguided perception that the WCED's intervention alone is sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations. In other words, a service provision intervention and providing resources will not necessarily in themselves change schools. As already stated, schools are continuously developing within themselves. Therefore, the quality of education depends mainly on the internal development of the school culture.

Thirdly, I argue that the WCED appears to be taking a reductionist approach in developing schools into learning organisations by overlooking key factors of school development. I contend that this type of reduction fails to recognise the complexity of schools as organisations. Furthermore, Middlewood *et al.* (2005:46) imply that an education department should give schools "the freedom and confidence to think and plan innovatively about how to turn schools into learning organisations." In support of this statement, I argue that schools should have a greater amount of autonomy in the way that they teach.

There is no doubt that education can best be achieved under optimal conditions. These conditions include physical infrastructure, resources, good management and leadership, to ensure that schools are institutions committed to quality teaching and learning. However, if the WCED imposes an intervention, it becomes "a mere sophisticated manipulation tool" (Dalin *et al.* 1993:133). This then, I believe, would be a continuation of the former apartheid legacy which South Africans so desperately want to move beyond.

3.4 RESTRUCTURING WITHIN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

South Africa forms part of the international community and as such should frame its education policies within a global context if the country is to participate and compete in an international environment. The South African education system has shifted significant decision-making authority to local schools. This decentralisation of authority cannot be separated from global influences, especially with regards to global competitiveness in education. Furthermore, because of migration and immigration, education is providing a key mechanism for communities and countries to access the skills required for global competitiveness in a global economy. According to Lewis (2006:33), there are strong indications that the WCED's restructuring programme is largely and conceptually framed in a global context.

Burbules and Torres (2000:10) argue that "most policy initiatives, including educational policies, are formed in the matrix of these four pressures", namely transnational capital, global political structures, domestic pressure and demands for political legitimacy, and a country's own internal needs and self-interest. A careful analysis of the WCED's restructuring programme, which is captured in the HCDS, places its restructuring within the context of abovementioned notions.

3.5 CHALLENGES WITHIN SCHOOLS

In spite of rigorous attempts by the WCED to restructure schools to produce quality education, many schools remain challenged in areas of service delivery, resources, learning outcomes and infrastructure. It is for this reason that I highlight the challenges within schools. According to the WCED Annual Report 2006/2007 (2007:15) "15 503 poorly resourced schools have been identified through the Quality Improvement, Development, Support and Upliftment Programme (QIDS-UP)." This programme is an initiative to provide basic resources such as equipment, supplies, infrastructure and personnel support to 374 primary and 33 secondary National Quintiles (poor) schools in the Western Cape. This programme will run until March 2011 and aims to benefit 229 980 learners within the poorest communities in the WCED area. The reality is that many of these schools in poor communities remain extremely under-resourced relative to schools in wealthier communities.

Even though a very large share of public funds is being channelled to poorer schools, inequality between schools in richer and poorer communities has not been substantially reduced. This is usually manifested in especially the matriculation examination results, where the pass rate percentage of former Model C schools is significantly higher than that of formerly disadvantaged schools.

There are also a significant number of dysfunctional schools still operating in the Western Cape that need much attention. There are various factors that contribute to the dysfunctional status of these schools. It is these contributing factors that I shall explicate further in this chapter. South Africa is experiencing a major shortage in expertise and a weakening of school education.

Morrow (2007:280) also claims that “many teachers, overwhelmed by despair and cynicism, defeated by the numbers of learners they are expected to teach and embittered by what they see as their poor level of payment, do the absolute minimum, devoting their energies to other pursuits.” As a former teacher who taught in a school in a formerly disadvantaged community, I can attest to this claim. Many of my former colleagues did very little teaching, using most of their time disciplining and controlling learners rather than on effective teaching. These teachers are also very reluctant to participate in extramural activities and usually leave the school grounds almost immediately after school is dismissed, bringing education to a complete halt.

The WCED accounting officers report for the year ended 31 March 2007 further confirms the already negative sentiment by stating that “recent evidence confirms that there are still school infrastructure backlogs, such as overcrowded classrooms, schools in bad condition, inadequate water and sanitation facilities, a shortage of laboratories, libraries and IT equipment, and the lack of fences and other safety/security features” (WCED Annual Report 2007:142). Even though this is a national report, the WCED is also affected. Therefore the premium task currently facing the WCED is the restoration of the culture of learning, teaching and service provision.

The need both to retain knowledge within schools and to focus on continuous resource development throughout all levels of the education sector is becoming a primary

concern throughout the education system. In an annual WCED Report (2006/2007) concerns were raised about the provision of suitable infrastructure and scholar transport, timeous delivery of text books and the quality of teaching, and learning outcomes. The basis of the WCED's restructuring initiative is an attempt to address this critical quest, the essence of which is to develop schools into learning organisations.

In spite of the many positive changes and improvements, based on the current challenges in schools as stated above, the WCED's current service provision still does not measure up to the challenges now facing schools in the Western Cape. For this reason the Western Cape MEC for Education proposed six interventions to address the challenges in the Western Cape schools:

- Quality Improvement, Development, Support and Upliftment Programme (QIDS UP). This venture aims to spend R386 875 million to provide more learning resources to schools in the Western Cape, especially schools in poor and disadvantaged communities and will include primary schools that supply learners to secondary schools with poor results;
- Set targets. Each high school in the Western Cape must set targets that are signed off by the school governing body and the RCL representatives, regarding overall pass target, matric endorsement target, Maths/Science targets for 2007, the reduction of the number of dropouts for Grades 10, 11 and 12 for 2007, and literacy and numeracy targets;
- Broaden base work on Literacy and Numeracy across the board. Literacy and Numeracy should be strengthened in both primary and high schools;
- Making schools a safe learning home for all. Violence and aggressive behaviour from learners has a negative impact on schools in the Western Cape. An inter-sectoral campaign will be embarked upon to build a safe learning environment for 2007 and beyond. This would include setting up codes of conduct and discipline that must be maintained. Assistance will be given to all schools to review and strengthen codes of conduct by October 2007;

- Monitor and evaluate. The redesign process of the WCED should be aimed at greater research capacity, monitoring, evaluation and accountability in order to effectively respond to the educational needs;
- Concentrating on schools performing below 60%;
- Under-performance should not be tolerated. Schools need to draw on success stories of other schools. A full analysis will be conducted of each under-performing school and if weak teachers, ineffective leadership and management prevail, these principals and management teams will be redeployed in line with accepted labour practices.

I now reflect on how the interventions as proposed by the MEC for Education in the Western Cape address the five constitutive meanings. At the most apparent level it addresses the elements of quality and power by focusing on the improvement of quality teaching and learning through better resources, monitoring, evaluation, accountability and performance. However, it falls short in addressing the issue of communication and collaboration. One can, however, assume that his proposal dovetails with the HCDS, which give a more detailed account on how the proposals will be achieved. I would still favour a more rigorous reflection on the collaboration between the schools, EMDCs and Head Office. This could also enhance better communication between the three tiers.

There are indications that show that the social context in the Western Cape education system is changing significantly. This means that the WCED will also have to change to meet the demands of the new challenges. The WCED also has to recognise that schools have their particular goals and ways of pursuing those goals. Furthermore, if the WCED aims to strengthen the role of teachers it could result in better teaching and learning conditions.

As stated in Chapter One, the WCED's main objective is to transform schools into learning organisations. Hence, as the official service provider to schools it is their responsibility to assist schools to become such organisations. This objective should be approached with the understanding that not all schools are on the same level of

development and require different interventions according to each unique environment.

Busher (2006:9) draws on Beare *et al.* (1989), who claim that “each school is unique and so the processes for developing it to make as successful as possible the quality of learning and teaching in it has to be unique.” This implies that service delivery must be context orientated. Hence, departmental officials require innovation, motivation and passion to deal with the unique circumstances as they are manifested in different schools throughout the Western Cape.

3.6 KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE REDESIGN PROJECT (RP)

The WCED Head Office plans, manages and coordinates specialised education support services to mainstream and inclusive education. To support its service delivery model the WCED adopted a Service Delivery Charter that is responsible for providing quality education to the people of the Western Cape Province, in line with the objectives of the National Department of Education Head Office also develops policy and provides coordination, monitoring and evaluation services. In terms of the Service Delivery Charter, the service delivery standards have been divided into three main categories: the Teaching and Learning Assessment and Support, Management and Governance, and Learning Site Environment.

In terms of the WCED report (2007:8) the fundamental aims of the Redesign Project are:

- Building of institutional capacity in support of iKapa Elihlumayo lead strategies (incl. the HCDS);
- Enhancement of service delivery;
- Acceleration of employment equity; and
- Achievement of envisaged educational outcomes.

All these purposes can be summarised as an attempt to create quality education with more desirable outcomes.

3.7 MACRO STRUCTURE

In this section I will look at how the constitutive meanings feature in the WCED's macro structure and how it contributes towards schools becoming learning organisations. The provincial government's preoccupation with aligning provincial departments with the provincial government was to attain its key objectives of creating employment and skills development. The provincial government's key objective therefore was to use the WCED's strategic infrastructure as a basis for its development, because the Rasool government was under pressure to define for itself a political principle in the Western Cape provincial government that was acceptable to the future Zuma administration which appeared to be inevitable at the time. He therefore used the HCDS as a vehicle to obtain political objectives with regards to equity.

Therefore the WCED had to appoint specifically Africans people, in key positions within the WCED. The second aspect was then to align every department within the province, including the WCED, with the provincial goal of development, particularly with skills to address the issue of unemployment.

The approval of the WCED's macro structure also marks the acceptance of the four recommended Head Office branches as opposed to the three former structures. These four are Strategy and Planning, Curriculum Management, Institutional Development and Coordination, and Branch: Corporate Services.

To get the restructuring programme off the ground, the WCED divided its restructuring programme into different phases. For logistical reasons, the WCED is divided into two main sections, namely Back Office and Front Office. The first restructuring phase would take place in with what the WCED calls Back-Office restructuring, which includes Head Office and District Offices (EMDCs). The second phase focuses on the Front-Office restructuring, which includes all educational institutions. The division of these sections is also in line with my explanation in chapter one that schools form the micro unit within the WEDC.

Once the Back Office was completely restructured, the service delivery model to all educational institutions would be aligned with the entire relevant directorate within the WCED with the purpose of providing effective and efficient service.

3.7.1 Back Office

To begin the restructuring of the Back Office, the WCED appointed a new senior management team to facilitate the Redesign Project (RP). The first phase of the Redesign Project is to build macro structure which focuses on the big picture. This involves increasing the number of branches from three to four in an attempt to create better coordination of strategic planning and produce policy developments that will result in improved capacity, while focusing on key services to EMDCs and educational institutions. The number of District Offices has also been increased from seven to eight to bring them in line with the eight municipal districts in the Western Cape. The appointment of the senior management team in October 2007 marked the beginning of the second phase of the RP, namely the micro design, which entails bringing development support closer to schools.

With its focus on managerial functions and policy development, Back Office plays a crucial role with regards to service delivery. If Head Office fails to serve, all educational institutions suffer. Similarly, if education institutions succeed, Head Office gets the thumbs-up. Therefore WCED claims that Back Office is a learning organisation operating on a sharp learning curve. The following step is developing Front Office into a learning organisation.

3.7.2 Front Office

The Front Office is what the WCED refers to as schools or education institutions. This is called the Front Office because the general public generally goes to schools mainly to discuss issues and queries. Educational institutions are also the places that directly impact on the general public, because they are the places where the values of society are negotiated and where moral purposes are manifested. It is also the success of individual schools that eventually reflect on the success of the WCED. As such, schools are representative of the WCED and are therefore referred to as part of the WCED administration.

Front Office plays a phenomenally important role in the service delivery model. The success of the entire education system is dependent upon the services that schools render to the learners. These learners are part of society and ultimately have to serve society. It is the sum of all education institutions that eventually reflects on the success of the WCED's service delivery model.

3.7.3 Analysis of macro organisational policy

In this section I probe for themes and patterns in the macro structure of the WCED. The idea is to ascertain whether the WCED's macrostructure is consistent with its objective to turn schools into learning organisations. Also, it is necessary to look for emerging themes that can be linked to the ethos and culture of a learning organisation. From the outset it becomes clear that power played a significant role in the appointment of high-ranking officials. The element of inclusiveness is also addressed, but within a political paradigm.

The macro structure appears to be fully compatible with the HCDS in all its shares the same objectives. It has however some additional elements, namely job creation, equity and redress. The fundamental basis for the macro structural development is to focus on quality education and the development of a good service provision model. Also, one of the Western Cape provincial government's objectives is to address the issues of equity and unemployment, but more importantly, to drive equity in the WCED's bureaucracy. This would make the top structure of the WCED more representative in terms of the demographics of the province. This particular mandate was accepted into the WCED restructuring model. I argue that the WCED understood this in a particular way and then set in motion a restructuring process based on a Human Capital Development Strategy which fundamentally frames the notion of a learning organisation.

According to Chisholm (2005:5), educational input and output are located within a "complex social, political and economic environment." Given the WCED's high dependence on the government, it is not surprising that politicians easily use the education system to advance their own political agenda. Furthermore, politicians and

education bureaucrats use the discourse of equity and unemployment within a neo-liberal economic rationale to convince the public of the need for equity and job creation in the Western Cape. I argue that by using the education system to address the issue of equity and job creation, the provincial government is reconceptualising the education process along economic lines. It must be acknowledged that schools within a South African paradigm do operate within an economic environment and as such are very susceptible to the impact and availability of resources.

Seemingly aware of the fact that this restructuring process is framed in a political paradigm, with its party political agenda to retain power, the WCED adopted this service delivery model with the objective to provide effective education for all. As such, the WCED is capacitating all educational departments and institutions to meet the objective of Quality education for all. The restructuring process was initiated on two levels, the macro and micro levels. The underlying basis of the WCED's macro and micro restructuring is to build a service delivery model on the Batho Pele principle, which means putting people's interests first. In terms of the WCED's macro and micro restructuring;

- The Circuit is the most critical unit of organisation for delivery to educational institutions;
- The District is the most critical unit of organisation for management;
- The Head Office is the most critical unit of organisation for policy, coordination and monitoring and evaluation.

Once these three units are adequately developed, the objective is to align them in such a way as to develop schools into self-sustaining learning organisations. The macro organisational model for the WCED was approved by Cabinet on 12 February 2007. In the macro report it was stated that “without a radical review of current systems, business processes and management interfaces, the culture change necessary to give effect to the new structures will not come about” (WCED ODA Report 2007:7).

3.7.4 Conclusion

In analysing the macro structure, I found that the policy is consistent with the WCED's main objective to develop schools into learning organisations. A significant shortcoming of the macro structure development of the WCED is that it falls short in supporting communication between and within the three tiers of the WCED. I argue that the strategy to address equity and unemployment exemplifies a broader political agenda that aims to retain party political control in the Western Cape. I therefore conclude that the restructuring process is just another way to politicise the teaching profession.

3.8 MICRO ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

In 2007 the WCED embarked on a redesign process aimed at improving institutional capacity through the adoption of the Human Capital Development Strategy (HCDS) for the Western Cape. The second phase of the redesign process involved appointing a senior management team which is responsible for implementing the microstructure in the Western Cape over the next three years. This phase is also the first stage of the Human Capital Development Strategy, which involved investigating whether the WCED has the capacity to implement the HCDS. The WCED's micro structure involves employing the right people in the right positions. According to the WCED (2007:4), "the micro design process was also conducted in a highly participative, interactive and transparent manner." This view is not necessarily shared by all stakeholders in the Western Cape education system, especially educators and principals.

For this process, a representative transitional panel was appointed to assist with the process of matching and placing. The main objective of the RP was to identify the kind of support that schools, colleges and other learning institutions need to ensure quality education for all. I argue that at this juncture already the restructuring comes into conflict with our earlier findings that schools are dynamic and therefore are in the best position to determine their own needs. From a conceptual point of view, the RP

appears to revert to the paternalistic decision-making process endemic to the apartheid education regime.

Key elements of the micro structure include the development of strong circuit teams which will bring development support closer to schools. The Circuit Teams include curriculum advisors for GET, Special Needs Education (SNE), professionals and Institutional Management and Governance (IMG), and school business management advisors. To increase productivity and effectiveness, the WCED increased the staff establishment on Circuit Team level by 69%, which meant an additional expenditure of R120 223 000.00. Head Office staff establishment was increased by 28%, which meant an additional financial expenditure of R40 136.000. The total additional expenditure amounted to R160 459 000.00. Whether this investment in human capital ultimately benefited the main service delivery beneficiaries, the learners, will be discussed later.

District Further Education and Training (FET) curriculum advisors will work across circuits. Most of the resources (75%) will be allocated to districts and circuits, while the smaller percentage (25%) of resources will go to Head Office. District staff will be increased by 69% in order to bring support closer to schools and to improve the quality of teaching and service delivery to schools.

Capacity in districts and circuits will be improved to support and develop institutional management. This also means the number of schools allocated to IMG will be reduced from about 26 to 16. Capacity at district level will further be increased by 24% to provide curriculum advice and special needs education by 16%.

Labour relations issues will be improved by introducing a new post for strategy and support in each district. Circuit team leaders will be appointed to manage multidisciplinary teams ranging from management, governance and administrative advisers to special needs education and all levels of general education and training advisers. Further education and training advisers will work across circuits. New posts will be created for School Enrichment Coordinators, who will assist schools in managing sports and cultural activities and coordinating integrated quality management systems.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) curriculum advice at district level will increase 700% (from one per district to eight), while Adult Education and Training (AET) posts will also be increased. Curriculum Advisors for the Foundational Phase (Grades 1 to 3) will increase from 25 to 49 (96%) and intermediate and senior phases (Grades 4 to 7) from 52 to 88 (69%). More social workers will be employed to address social issues that confront so many schools in previously disadvantaged communities. To finance all this will cost the WCED R160 000 000. 00 which represent 1.5% of the WCEDs overall budget. The Superintendent General of the WCED, Mr Swart, believes that “this investment in the form of improved quality of support will far outweigh the cost.”

3.8.1 Analysis of micro organisational policy

The WCEDs micro organisational policy is driven by the HCDS. The HCDS, on the other hand, support many of the constitutive meanings along with additional themes like job creation, equity and redress. The Redesign Project, as contained within the micro organisational policy is highly supportive of the constitutive meanings, which in turn constitute support for the development of learning organisations. However, the positive elements of the micro organisational structure can be further enhanced if a more collaborative approach is adopted and practitioners, namely educators, are drawn into this development initiative. Micro policy indeed focuses on better service delivery for the enhancement of quality education as highlighted above.

3.8.2 Conclusion

The micro organisational policy seems very supportive of the constitutive meanings; for instance, it supports four of the five constitutive meanings, namely quality education, inclusive education, collaborative teamwork, and power. Therefore it has the potential to significantly contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. However, the merits of the micro development policy may be significantly reduced as it operates within an environment of skills shortages and budgetary constraints. The concern is that micro organisational policy may be reduced to rhetorical expressions, so often found in party political speeches about education.

Therefore, at the very least policy makers and Head Office officials should pay closer attention to classroom needs.

3.9 SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER (SDC)

The SDC addresses some very fundamental issues that are essential in developing quality education. These issues include greater access to and quality education for all through better resource availability, developing leadership and management, and the improvement of learning infrastructures at all schools. In 2005 the WCED developed a Service Delivery Charter. This charter was presented to the Top and Broad Management team and accepted, and was launched on 17 August 2007. The WCED has made the following undertakings:

- 100% of compulsory school-going-age learners will have access to appropriate learning sites available to accommodate diverse learner's needs in the Western Cape every school day of the year.
- 10% increase of learners to ECD, FET and ABET will have access to appropriate learning sites available to accommodate diverse learner needs in the Western Cape.
- 10% of learners with special needs will have access to appropriate learning sites in the Western Cape every school day of the year.
- 100% of all educators are competent and well prepared at all learning sites in the Western Cape for every lesson of every school day of the year.
- Every school day of the year, all educators at all learning sites within the Western Cape will be able to recognise learners with barriers to learning and take an appropriate course of action.
- 100% of appropriate learning support material for all learning areas and subjects is provided to all learners in all learning sites in the Western Cape on the first day of the school year.
- 100% of learners from Grade 8 are given adequate and appropriate guidance and preparation for further study and the world of work at all learning sites in the Western Cape at least 15 school days per term.

Some of these undertakings are very ambitious and whether the WCED has the infrastructure to do well on these undertakings and whether these proposed services

would assist schools developing into learning organisations will form the basis of this inquiry.

3.9.1 Management and Governance

Management and governance are regarded as important elements in the development of quality educational institutions. Governance sees to how power is exercised in the management of economic and social resources for development. To this end the WCED hopes to achievement the following:

- All learning site management teams in the Western Cape display effective leadership and management every school day of the year.
- All relevant information is conveyed via reliable and appropriate communication methods to all stakeholders in the Western Cape at least once a quarter.
- All governing bodies at all learning sites in the Western Cape have meetings at least once a quarter and consult with parents and the community at least once a year.

3.9.2 Learning Site Environment

From the outset the policy reflects a very ambitious endeavour. Learning sites include schools, FETs, ABET and Special Schools. The policy stipulates that:

- All learning sites in the Western Cape are secured and all learners and staff are safe every day of the year;
- Sufficient and appropriate accommodation is provided for all learners in the Western Cape every school day of the year.

Ascertaining to what extent these services have been provided to learning sites will form the basis of the discussion that follows. I shall now give a more detailed account on each policy issue as reflected in the Service Delivery Charter.

3.9.3 Analysis of the Service Delivery Charter policy

I now explore how the policy maps onto the five constitutive meanings and how the SDC contributes towards schools becoming learning organisations. A positive aspect about the SDC is that it appears to be simple, easy to understand, and yet very complex when it comes to the implementation of policies. In addition, its progress can be easily tracked. The policy commences with a very ambitious intention to provide learners with access to education. This can be translated into inclusive education, because it gives learners of school-going age, ECD, FET and ABET learners more access to education.

The increase of staff establishment, providing guidance, development, resources and infrastructure can be considered a commitment to providing quality education. However, the reality is that the staff establishment in Western Cape schools is far from being ideal, with some high schools having an educator/learner ratio of 48:1. Furthermore, in the learning site environment section, the WCED stipulated that sufficient and appropriate accommodation be provided to all learners in the Western Cape. This undertaking is idealistic considering the high educator/learner ratio mentioned earlier and cited in Morrow (2007). Notwithstanding the ratio, number of learners especially in rural areas who does not attend any schools also makes this endeavour idealistic. The amount of school being vandalize in the Western Cape and other budgetary constrains also makes it difficult for the WCED to make good on this promise.

The underlying value and vision of this policy are to create greater access to quality education through better provision of adequate resources. Timely communication of important information is mentioned, but lacks explication. Also, the school governing body activities need further clarification. The policy is silent on the day-to-day communication between the three tiers in the WCED. Here the legitimacy of policy comes into play because deliberation and the general interest of the masses have been overlooked. Collaboration is only mentioned with regards to SGB and the communities. One would have expected the policy to elaborate more on the consultation process between practitioners and departmental officials. After all, schools interact with EMDCs and Head Office on a daily basis. Educators are the

people who keep the wheels of education oiled and running. This relationship between educators and departmental officials is not always sound. Thus, communication and collaboration with regards to important matters remain largely untouched.

The power relation also features very prominently as Top and Broad Management teams had to approve the Service Delivery Charter. Although all five constitutive elements are addressed in this policy, it lacks rigor and remains mum with regards to collaborative teamwork between the three levels within the WCED. Additional value would have been added to the SDC if it had more vocal on the element of collaborative teamwork between Head Office, EMDCs and education institutions.

The absence of collaborative teamwork between the three tiers within the WCED could impede school development. However, I argue that with most of the constitutive elements present in the SDC, it may be considered a favourable policy to promote better service delivery that may even lead to an overall acceptance of schools. This policy also has the potential to significantly contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. The goals of the SDC can be more easily achieved if more consideration was given to collaborative objectives.

Although much is being done to assist dysfunctional schools, it is my contention that the SDC does not provide a more comprehensive plan to address the needs of dysfunctional schools still operating in the Western Cape. However, in the absence of a plan for dysfunctional schools, some of the other important themes that emerged out of this policy are leadership and safety. Both of these are important characteristics of a learning organisation. In the final analysis I argue that the inclusion of all five constitutive elements, along with the additional emerging themes highlighted carefully enshrined in the SDC, means that more educational challenges can effectively addressed.

3.9.4 Conclusion

The SDC ranges between realistic expectations and idealism. This is because the policy attempts to create greater access to education with better resources, when in fact the WCED has to adhere to strict fiscal discipline because of budgetary constraints. Greater access also means more learners will enter the education sector,

which means more resources will have to be made available. On the one hand, the policy addresses many realistic issues that are practicable as well as issues that have far-reaching implications. For example the policy aims to provide 100% material support to education institutions in an economic climate characterised by immense budgetary constraints. Nowhere does the policy indicate how finances play a role or how they will be sourced. It appears to me that the SDC contains a discourse that does not correspond to practice.

Also to make all educators 100% competent and to bring about effective leadership and management in all schools implies that a sound and perpetual teacher development programme would be put in place, especially with the change in the educational landscape and the introduction of so many policies in the education system. So it appears that the SDC is intended to address short-term to long-term objectives especially with regards to some very ambitious undertakings mentioned in the policy.

3.10 HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (HCDS)

In March 2006 the WCED initiated a Human Capital Development Strategy (HCDS) plan in an attempt to provide quality education for all. The HCDS underlies all educational planning within the WCED. The HCDS was a provincial government initiative and passed on to the WCED. The Western Cape Education MEC stated that “The Provincial Government of the Western Cape has appointed the WCED as the lead department responsible for developing the human capital of the province” (Report 2006). The HCDS was approved in November 2005 and officially launched in March 2006.

The HCDS focuses on four key strands:

1. To improve the conditions of education at institution level;
2. To improve the educational environment;
3. To improve the quality of education; and
4. Improving access to jobs and scarce skills.

Meeting these four commitments would require a lengthy process with no guarantee of success. It would also require a collaborative approach with all relevant stakeholders, which include Head Office, EMDCs, schools, SGBs and community forums.

A WCED 2007 Report highlights the progress that was made with regard to the implementation of policies aligned to these four strands. They include the above four mentioned strands, as indicated below.

3.10.1 Conditions of education

The following are achievements and endeavours as highlighted in the WCED 2007 report.

- 15 new schools were completed in time for the 2006 school year.
- Building plans for 12 focus schools were approved, and building commenced for eight schools. Infrastructure, upgrading and refurbishing of all focus schools are well in progress.
- A management team for Quality Improvement, Development, Support and Upliftment Programme (QIDS UP) was initiated in 2007. This initiative aims to improve the rate of efficiency of delivery of services and management of resources at schools in disadvantaged areas.
- The HRD Directorate developed a training programme for SGBs as well as a code of conduct for SGBs.
- The number of schools attaining Section 21 status increased from 409 to 934. Much remains to be done considering the fact that 934 schools represent only a small percentage of schools in the Western Cape.

The above-mentioned achievements and initiatives may contribute toward improving the conditions of education in the Western Cape. The reality is that the teacher/learner ratio is still very high with many educators are overwhelmed by despair. So, more schools and teachers are still needed to significantly impact on the quality of education. An encouraging fact is that a developmental programme for SGBs may continue to improve conditions at school level.

3.10.2 Improving the educational environment

Improving the educational environment may be achieved more easily in a collaborative environment as promulgated in this policy. The following have already been achieved:

- An integrated Safe School Strategy was developed in collaboration with various role-players within the WCED, other provincial and national departments, including Community Safety, the South African Police Services (SAPS), Justice and Social Development;
- The learner behaviour strategies programme was implemented in all EMDC after Circuit Team members were trained and capacitated as diversion or developmental programme facilitators;
- The policy on minimum standards for special education services to learners experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties has been approved as WCED policy, and manuals were developed and distributed to schools;
- HIV/Aids Peer Education Programmes are operating in 136 secondary schools, making use of trained NPO supervisors to assist and inform learners.

This initiative appears fairly collaborative and may easily find support because it acknowledges the development and participation of important role players. It creates a basis for partnership between the WCED, local schools and other role-players. In spite of these initiatives, the amount of resources allocated to Western Cape schools still remains inadequate and does not allow a significant impact on the many serious challenges like crime, drug addiction and sexual promiscuity. Also, the onslaught of the Aids pandemic is also still adding to educator attrition rate in the Western Cape schools, with Marrow (2007:202) predicting that “We will have to live with this problem for at least the next decade – until 2015”.

3.10.3 Improving the quality of education

If quality of teaching is to be improved, learning and teaching should form the basis of this initiative. Here is a list of elements achieved through the HCDS:

- The WCED's Quality Assurance Directorate produced a discussion document on quality public education and is in the process of refining it;
- Student performance in the Senior Certificate examination is improving, with an overall percentage of 83,7%;
- A learner tracking system was developed and implemented and is currently operational in all public ordinary and special schools;
- A No-Fee Schools Policy was implemented in 2006 and up to date 652 schools are now benefiting from this policy. This relates to a total of 346 000 learners;
- An additional 500 posts were created to improve the teacher-learner ratio. These include 50 additional mathematics/science teachers, 21 teachers for focus schools, and 70 posts in the 7 districts to assist disadvantaged schools and the 34 under-performing high schools. The Teacher Assistant Programme (TAP) also appointed 510 teacher assistants in 163 schools;
- A Literacy and Numeracy Strategy was launched in 2006; and
- The WCED initiated the ICT computer facilities and 225 schools are currently using 22 271 computers, while 73 more schools will be equipped in the 2007/2008 financial year.

This policy is clearly geared towards the development of learners, since it provides resources and access to education. It also contributes to more human resources and attempts to reduce the educator-learner ratio, which should lead to better quality teaching.

3.10.4 Improving access to jobs and scarce skills

The following are initiatives undertaken by the WCED to create skills for the job market:

- To develop skills for jobs, the WCED initiated 50 Dinaledi Schools with a specific focus on developing mathematics, science and technology in the Western Cape. These schools are well resourced with computer centres and are conducting winter schools for Grade 12 learners in mathematics, science and career guidance;

- The WCED has launched a special Focus School Programme, which includes 28 focus schools for Engineering, Arts and Culture, Sports and Business Management. These schools were given additional resource support to deliver on their goals of being schools of excellence for their focus area.

Looking at the above-mentioned achievements, it is clear that the WCED has been very active in working towards achieving its objectives for its 2006/2007 service delivery model. In spite of these achievements, many schools continue operating under difficult circumstances and the gap between the well-resourced schools and formerly disadvantaged school continues to widen.

With regards to the HCDS, Nyalashe (2006:4) claims that one of the main objectives of the HCDS is to achieve “equity and redress, alleviating poverty, creating jobs and empowering the people of the WC to be agents of change.” These are logically necessary conditions that are in line with what the Western Cape community’s need.

Noddings (1997:40) observed that “society does not need to make its children first in the world in mathematics and science. It needs to care for its children – to reduce violence, to respect honest work of every kind, to reward excellence at every level... to ensure a place for every child and emerging adult in the economic and social world, to produce people who can care competently for their own families and contribute effectively to their communities.” This addresses the basis of the challenge in historically disadvantaged schools in the Western Cape, where many learners have to deal with abuse, starvation and violence before they can learn.

The Report (2006:10) further states that “A key feature of the HCDS is to implement an integrated programme of action that promotes synergy between departments, civil society, the business community and municipalities in curbing crime and promoting economic growth and employment.” This policy will not only align departments, but indicate commitment from government to address social issues. I contend that the HCDS is too ambitious in its objectives, but is nevertheless making good inroads.

Todd (2007:3) draws on a report *Every Child Matters* (HMSO, 2003), which posits that the fundamental aim of reform “is to organise services around the needs of children and young people. Achieving this is a shared responsibility between national, regional and local government, partners in the voluntary and private sectors and children, young people and families (section 5.57).” This is an affirmation that through collaborative partnership between the WCED (as service providers), school and the parent community with a collective focus on learner achievement more can easily be achieved.

Since student achievement forms the centre of school achievement, it is only reasonable to conclude that students should have a voice in the developmental process. In this regard, Silva (2003:11) observed that “to date, there is little evidence of student voice and participation within the increasing number of school reform efforts that claim their involvement.” If schools are to develop into learning organisations, they should attempt to involve students in educational decisions that concern them. Learners should know that education is more than just turning up for classes and doing their homework as criteria for passing a particular grade, but that education dictates their future.

Looking at the main objectives of the HCDS, it appears to be driven by economic imperatives aimed to gear up the Western Province for economic development. As such, I believe that the HCDS is shaped beyond the scope of education imperatives and is located in broader ideological, economic and political contexts that aim to advance the political agenda of the ruling party.

Through the HCDS the WCED attempts to ensure that every department is driven towards collaborative objectives. In terms of the WCED’s Annual Performance Plan (2007/08 to 2009/10:14) one of the main objectives of the HCDS is to “improve access to the world of work and scarce skills.” This essentially indicates that the WCED expect schools to develop and supply human capital to the work place. This type of thinking is consistent with the neoliberalist notion which ultimately points to a political economic paradigm. Giroux (2002:433) opposes this type of thinking by pointing out that “education must not be confused with job training.”

Through the notion of skills development and job creation it is also becoming apparent that the WCED sees the HCDS initiative as a basis on which learning organisations are to be developed. As such, it can be said that the very basis of the HCDS is fundamentally framed in the notion of a learning organisation. Furthermore, the HCDS is geared to target the market. Therefore it can be argued that it is the WCED understands that the schools must service the market out of which the notion of a learning organisation comes. This notion seems to support a neoliberalist approach to education. I argue that schools are not equipped to develop skills for the work place. Therefore I argue that the WCED's understanding of a learning organisation is fundamentally flawed conceptually.

When the WCED adopted the HCDS, it was convinced that schools can develop human capital. I argue that it is not up to schools to develop human capital. I am a proponent of the notion that schools have a calling beyond the creation of skills. Therefore it should not be up to schools to produce workers for the job market. Kohn (1999:115) draws on Professor Nodding's claims that "the main aim of education should be to produce competent, caring, loving, and lovable people." With these qualities firmly enshrined into our education system, an improved quality of education is more likely to follow. Furthermore what schools can do is to develop a country's conceptual goals of numeracy and literacy skills. On this basis I argue that the WCED's understanding of a learning organisation is fundamentally flawed conceptually.

In term of the HCDS, schools are responsible for the creation of skilled workers. By accepting the provincial government HCDS initiative, the WCED has adopted a neo-liberal approach to educational restructuring. Hursh (2003:49) argues that "By promoting economic growth over other goals, neo-liberal educational discourses emphasise holding schools accountable for efficiently producing workers who contribute to economic expansion."

3.10.5 Analysis of the HCDS

The fundamental purpose of the HCDS is to provide quality education through improving the conditions of education at institutional level. To achieve this objective

a collaborative teamwork approach appears to be used through the establishment of a safer schools project as well as Circuit Teams facilitating learner behaviour strategies programmes with educators. On closer investigation it is found that collaboration is restricted only between departments at Head-Office and District Office level. This excludes important role players in the education sector, especially practitioners. This would in effect also down play broad collaborative teamwork which interwoven with inclusivity. In this regard the notion of communicative freedom (which implies consensual decision-making) has been greatly reduced. This also reduces the policy from being subjected to broader scrutiny and better validity. In spite of good intentions of the HCDS schools in the Western Cape still face the daunting task of operating in areas ravaged by crime, drug abuse and promiscuous behaviour.

The collaborative approach should have been extended to policy makers, school management teams and practitioners. This may have led to a more comprehensive policy formulated that could have placed more emphasises on the prevention of drug abuse, crime and promiscuity. As these social factors are addressed, it becomes incumbent on teachers, as guardians of the community, to ensure that this is carried through. With the involvement of practitioners, educators may have responded more positively and may have had a more active role in the safer school initiative. Teachers have a moral obligation to foster and inculcate appropriate values in learners. Had the collaborative approach to safety and security been further extended to educators and learners who are facing these challenges, it may have a more positive effect.

Inclusive education appears to be featuring prominently in the No-Fee Schools Policy. This enables more disadvantaged learners to have access to education. The element of power is highly political. As already mentioned, the HCDS was conceived at the provincial government level in a political paradigm and was placed in the lap of the WCED. Other emerging themes in the HCDS are equity and redress and job creation.

In addressing the WCED's service provision standards, the HCDS supports some of the constitutive meanings. By supporting some of these constitutive meanings that provide the necessary impetus to develop schools into learning organisation, it appears that the HCDS is consistent with the WCED's objective to develop schools into learning organisations. However, the policy is completely silent with regards to

communication between schools, EMDCs and Head Office. This silence infringe on the notion of understanding, agreement and validity as discussed earlier in chapter two. Furthermore, it is contrary to the Habermasian notion of consensus and deliberative democracy.

This lack of effective communication now juxtapose against the notion of inclusivity because of its exclusion of some role-players. An inclusion of all stakeholders could significantly contribute to quality education and ultimately to the development of schools into learning organisations. This lack of involvement denies the policy from being subjected to broader scrutiny and better validity. Furthermore, it goes against the fundamental principle of deliberative democracy since “deliberations are inclusive and public.” (Habermas, 1996:305) As established earlier, the current educational climate is in desperate need of consensual decision-making and democracy to effectively transform schools in the Western Cape to learning organisations.

Complete consensus may never be guaranteed regardless of the process or paradigm one uses. However, effective communication could nevertheless pre-empt criticism, and may also lead to critical engagement, reflection and ultimately establish better responds to the policy from stakeholders. In other words effective communication set in motion a process of deliberation and ownership. To reiterate this point, van Wyk (2006:193) draws on the Habermasian notion of communication that implies that “consensual decision-making and participatory democracy are needed for educational transformation”. This alludes to the notion that an understanding and acceptance of a service provision policy means to know how it can be use to obtain the objective to develop schools into a learning organisation.

In the case of the WCED, deliberative democracy may offer the most justifiable solution for educational transformation that may ultimately lead to the transformation of schools into learning organisation. Through the inclusion of communication between all three tiers of the education system, a structure could be put in place in reaching an understanding between all relevant stakeholders on what strategies could best contribute towards quality education that could ultimately lead to schools becoming learning organisations. The lack of communication points to the conceptual inadequacy in the WCEDs service provision model. Better communication between

all three tiers in the education sectors may result in service provision policies and information being handled more reasonably, subjected to critical judgment and may result in achieving better outcomes.

3.10.7 Conclusion

No structured guidelines exist on how schools, District Offices and Head Office can combine their efforts to make this policy work. A lack of communication is one of the contributing factors to the low quality of education. Many challenges and obstacles could have been avoided if a forum for consistent communication between all three tiers in the education system in the Western Cape had been established. This lack of effective communication in the HCDS and the neoliberalist paradigm in which it operates may further marginalised poor learners in the Western Cape.

Also, educators have over a period of time left the education system and the attrition rate has been exacerbated by high educator-learner ratio, low morale of teachers, heavy workload and inadequate remuneration of teachers. The WCEDs Education Labour Relations Council Report (2005:8) states that “A large number of South African educators have been recruited by overseas countries ... mainly seeking better pay and living conditions.” The report (2005:8,9) further draws on Ramrathan (2003), who claims “the diminishing intake of new recruits into tertiary institution, lack of faith and interest in teaching ... and with changing patterns of enrolments of learners ... more concerted effort is needed to develop a better planning system for the production of educators.” Despite this gloom and doom picture, I still conclude that the HCDS initiative is a step in the right direction to address the ethos and culture of a learning organisation. The main question now is whether the WCED can deliver on the HCDS policy.

The appropriate mode of communication (communicative rationality) that I proposed is to review the discursive rationality that prevails in the HCDS policy. By this I mean focusing more on resources at the expense of communication (which here implies consensual decision-making). This means providing proportionate consideration to both resources and communication. I argue that in spite of the value of resources effective communication is crucial because even resources can create tension if

inequitable distribution exists. I therefore claim that communication should take precedence over resources. Furthermore I consider effective communication in and between schools, District Offices and Head Office to be the most appropriate means to achieve compatibility with the constitutive meanings I constructed and ultimately the WCEDs objective to assist schools becoming learning organisations. I posit that effective communication (i.e. deliberative democracy) may result in better commitment and cooperation of all education stakeholders and better realisation of the WCEDs objectives.

3.11 ASPECT OF TIME

The aspect of time allocation is a critical element in determining the outcome of service provision and ultimately the quality of teaching and learning. However, time is a commodity that the WCED Head Office alone controls and monitors, and schools exercise very little control over time for teaching and development. Unrealistic time allocation to a particular job or project may result in ineffective performance of duties and undesirable qualities. The *Government Gazette* (2007:11) indicates that the national and provincial government has an obligation “to provide an enabling environment for the preparation and development of teachers.” However, considering the amount of time allocated for teacher development, this hardly provides an enabling environment for adequate preparation and development of educators. Allocating sufficient time for teacher’s development could impact positively on classroom practice.

Furthermore, as a former teacher I experienced a significant increase in workload after the introduction of outcomes-based education (OBE), Curriculum 2005 and other related policies and practices. Teachers are loaded with administrative duties which include assessment, lesson preparation, preparing and constructing and maintaining educators and learner’s portfolios, and record keeping. Many of these duties are performed after actual teaching time.

The *Government Gazette* (2007:12) further draws on the President’s Education Initiative research project (1999), which concluded that “the most critical challenge

for teacher education in South Africa was the limited conceptual knowledge of many teachers. This includes poor grasp of their subjects as evidenced by a range of factual errors made in content and concepts during lessons.” On the basis of this report one would expect the WCED to allocate significantly more time to in-service training and development of teachers. It is for this reason that I carefully examine the allocation of time afforded to educators and Circuit Team members to perform their duties. As a teacher I found that teachers are greatly constrained when it comes to giving learners the time they deserved.

In terms of the ELRC Resolution 7 of 1998, educators are scheduled to work for 1800 actual working hours per annum. According to a work time policy document, the WCED acknowledges that “the vast majority of educators are working more hours than this.” The WCED states that the current work time amounts to (200 x 7) hours. The remaining hours are for duties performed outside the formal school day.

A typical school week includes 5 days of 7 hours which make up a total of 35 hours per week. In terms of the ELRC Resolution 6 of 2002 paragraph 4[4], teachers should take one or more breaks; “therefore educators must be allowed at least 30 minutes per day for a mealtime.” The workload of teachers consists of both teaching and non-teaching duties as required by the Education Labour Relation Council and the local school programme. These duties are performed during a formal school day which includes (7 hours):

The following is a time schedule as required by the Education Labour Relation Council (ELRC) Resolution 7 of 1998:

- Scheduled teaching time

- Relief teaching

- Extra- and co-curricular duties

- Pastoral duties (playground, detention, scholar patrol, etc.)

- Administration

- Supervisory and management duties

- Professional duties (meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences, etc.)

- Planning, preparation, assessment and evaluation.

Duties performed outside the formal school day (after the 7 hours):

Planning, preparation and evaluation

Extra- and co-curricular duties (sport, cultural activities, etc.)

Professional duties (meetings, e.g. staff, parents, governing body), workshop, seminars, conference, etc.)

In the above-mentioned time schedule educators seem to be loaded with work and not much room is left for flexibility in individual situations. Kohn (1999:95) posits that “telling teachers exactly what to do and then holding them accountable for the results does not reflect a commitment to excellence. It reflects a commitment to an outmoded, top-down model of control.” This argument is an indictment against policies that have been handed down by the WCED to schools and then entail sending around watchdogs to ensure that policies have been rigidly implemented. This type of policy does not contribute too much towards developing schools into learning organisations.

It is also not uncommon for teachers to say that too many policies come too quickly. Some have hardly adjusted to a new policy before the others follow. When teachers perceive that policies require them to learn and implement too many things at once, they feel overwhelmed, frustrated and ineffective. It can thus be said that education has changed far beyond what teachers have been trained for, but the aspect of time with regards to training and development has not significantly changed.

It has to be understood that schools operate on different levels and that teachers on their respective levels have significantly different teaching workloads. This workload would depend on the individual school, the grades you teach, the amount of administration time you get and post level that you function on. Chisholm *et al.* (2005:168) found that “the amount of time that teachers actually spend teaching as a percentage of all their activities ranges from 6% to 56% of timetabled time.” There are various factors contributing to this situation. First it should be understood that this reduced time of actual teaching is more prevalent in poor schools, where high teacher-pupil ratio exists and where the teacher absenteeism is higher than normal. Furthermore, the individual school culture usually dictates the amount of time spending on actual teaching.

The National Curriculum Statement for Grade 10-12 of 2005 strongly advised teachers “to spend time with subject experts in developing a deep understanding of the skills, knowledge and values set out in the Subject Statements. The quality and rigour of this engagement will determine the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.” This demand seems unreasonable, taken into consideration the amount of educator workload. The impracticality of this request is reflected in the above-mentioned teacher’s schedule. Teachers are so loaded with administrative duties, a curriculum that is overloaded, preparation of learner and teacher portfolios, learner profiles and extra-curricular activities that educators can hardly find time to spend with subject advisers. As a pilot finding also indicates, “Primary school educators said that they spend most of their time on assessment and often had to find extra class time to complete assessments” (Chisholm *et al* 2005:129).

To provide quality education for all, stakeholders need proper training and time to adapt to their new roles and given adequate time to implement newly acquired information. The WCED also needs to surrender their need to control and muster up the courage to let go and allow schools to open up to the emerging needs of school and communities and how they can create partnerships to collectively meet these needs.

As mentioned in Chapter One, schools need more than just an improvement of material resources, but the authentic involvement of all stakeholders in the education process. Through the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, partnerships are forged which in turn stimulate creative thinking that ultimately generates new and innovative ideas. The extent to which all are involved will eventually influence the decision-making processes and ultimately determine the outcome of school development. The partnership of all stakeholders will create a reciprocal flow of resources that will mainly benefit schools.

3.11.1 Analysis of aspect of time policy

The intended objective of the time policy seems to have been designed to benefit the learner optimally. However, looking at the policy closely, it is evident that it falls

short of benefiting learners because of the unintended negative impact it has on educators, who are supposed to be the guardians of quality teaching. The quality of teaching has been severely compromised by the busy schedule of teachers and the inadequate time allocated for development of teachers.

A further concern, however, is that Head Office and senior management at EMDCs still determine the aspect of time with regards to teacher development, how much time is to be spend on workshops and what time and days workshops should take place. This may not be in the best interests of quality education, and better consultation and negotiations with educators could result in better development and collaboration between teachers, Circuit Teams and the WCED. The element of power features very prominently in the time policy, because the decision making process is vested in Head Office; they alone have influence over what amount of time is to be spent on the teaching schedule and the development of teachers.

This power that emerges from the time policy is mostly negative, since it is located in a non-consultative paradigm even though the intention is to benefit learners maximally. A deliberative approach in the construction of this policy would not only have promoted the legitimacy of this policy but would also provide better opportunity to correct unanticipated mistakes that may flow out of this policy. The high workload as pointed out earlier also has a negative impact on the quality of education, and this in turn contributes to the low morale and high rate of educator absenteeism. The result is the negative impact of the time policy. Sometimes the policy is not practicable and teachers have to spend much time maintaining order before a lesson can commence. There is also a large amount of time spent on other activities. These activities and the amount of time spent on them will vary from school to school.

3.11.2 Conclusion

As pointed out earlier, the time allocated for teacher development is found to be very inadequate. The time allocated for teacher training leaves very little room for change and can only be negotiated with EMDC's directors or Head Office directorate. Hargreaves (1997:112) argues that "if the timetable does not allow teachers to meet

during the regular school day, for example, collaboration can become exhausting and contrived.” Based on Hargreaves’s comment, I argue that the aspect of time with regards to teacher development and teaching contact time is an indication of the contested nature of policy intention and policy implementation. A mismatch between policy intention and policy implementation can have a significant impact on the quality of education and should therefore be reviewed with great care and consideration for the needs of teachers.

In terms of the *Government Gazette* No. 22512 (2001:11), school standards are evaluated as follows: “A measure used by whole-school evaluation in judging a school’s performance is the amount and quality of in-service training undertaken by staff and its impact on learning and standards of achievement.” This judgement may ultimately reflect back on the WCED service provision model, since it has more power in deciding the amount of time and the quality of in-service training provided to schools. I further noted that the policy on time is not aligned with the constitutive meanings, thus creating an environment of contradiction and disconnection.

Chisholm *et al* (2005:182) draws on findings that state “there is a significant erosion of teaching time during the school day.” This has been my experience as a teacher for 12 years. This erosion of teaching time led me conclude that the policy of time has been significantly diluted at many if not all schools in the Western Cape. This is due to number of factors as listed above and among others, disciplinary problem in class, school fund raising efforts and high teacher absenteeism. A positive link between the time policy and quality education can be asserted, depending on the position you occupy in the education system. I argue, however, that for educators there may be little evidence to suggest a positive link. The aspect of time policy does not support the constitutive meanings and as a result may significantly impede the WCED’s contribution to develop schools into learning organisations. I therefore conclude that the time policy needs considerable review especially with regards to collaborative consultation if quality education and better communication is to be established between the WCED and schools.

3.12 CONTRIBUTION OF OTHER ROLE PLAYERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOLS AS LEARNING ORGANISATIONS

I shall now focus on the relevant stakeholders and how they contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations. I have previously argued that the WCED's service provision model alone is not enough to develop schools into learning organisations. The crucial impact of other role players in the developmental process of schools is undeniable. Some of these role players play an important role in the implementation of policies or developing schools into quality learning institutions.

In this section I analyse how these different role players fit into the framework of the policies and the five constitutive meanings that I have identified. I shall also examine the contribution of each role player in providing a climate for school development. To understand schools you have to closely look at the dynamics that make up schooling. Schools are robust institutions and it is easier to change educational policies than to change the way in which schools operate.

In looking at the service provision model, it appears that the WCED is simplifying the operation of schools by focusing on only one particular level of description or detail and assume that they are all alike. When there is a genuine vision, schools excel and learn not because of WCED or EMDC intervention, but because schools have a desire to do so.

3.12.1 District offices

District Offices are commonly known as EMDCs. Districts should provide critical managerial services to schools to assist them to become learning organisations. The overall aim of districts or EMDCs is to provide quality services to schools to ensure quality education in their respective districts by providing important support to the circuit teams firstly and then to schools. District managers should have extensive engagements with different focus groups at schools, including school principals, school management teams, school governing bodies (SGBs) and unions.

3.12.2 Circuit Teams

Circuit Teams are housed at EMDCs. They consist of a multifunctional team which includes circuit managers, curriculum advisers, psychologists, ELSEN educators and welfare workers. The main focus of Circuit Teams is to provide quality services to educational institutions. In doing so, circuit teams are working in close collaboration with senior management teams and principals at schools. Senior management teams usually identify problems at their respective schools and inform the circuit teams about such problems. Circuit teams then perform an internal audit at the respective school to ascertain the most appropriate intervention.

The WCED is then responsible for providing circuit teams with sufficient capacity and resources to deal with these challenges which may include curriculum advice, psychological or social issues, governance and school-based management, and support with regards to specialised learner and educator support. Schools, especially at classroom level, are greatly benefiting from MFT interventions and are in constant contact with curriculum advisers for information about pace setters, examinations and workshops about subject matters.

3.12.3 School governing bodies

School governing bodies have the awesome responsibility of developing schools into institutions that provide quality education to all their children as well as the community in which they are located. In fact Clase *et al.* (2007:248) draw on Van Wyk (2004:52), who asserts that “SGBs in South Africa have at their disposal considerable powers and functions bestowed upon them by the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1998).” With power come great responsibilities. These responsibilities can only be efficiently carried out in a spirit of mutual trust and collaboration between school governing bodies and WCED head office officials. With proper use of power and authority, SGBs can make a significant contribution towards developing schools into learning organisations.

Furthermore, SGB members who serve schools in historically disadvantaged communities need skills and training to effectively carry out their responsibility and

provide meaningful input in their schools. Kanjee & Prinsloo (2005:132) argues that “there is little evidence that SGBs have managed to improve the learning environment by improving the physical conditions of schools.” This could be because of a lack of physical engagement with schools. It is clear that there is still much tension between school governing bodies and the WCED with regard to quality and quantity empowerment programmes to SGBs, school management and teachers.

3.12.4 Schools’ contribution

Schools play a significant role in the development of a learning ethos and have a moral obligation towards the community they serve. The aim of schools generally is to provide learners with sufficient opportunity to acquire the knowledge and critical skills necessary to meet their own needs and those of the community they serve. To schools this would fundamentally mean promoting quality teaching and learning. However, to achieve quality teaching and learning there needs to be collaborative teamwork among teaching staff members and subject teachers. This would mean principals and heads of departments (HODs) need to give careful consideration to the way their authority is managed and recognise the importance of consultation.

The curriculum that schools present to learners and the time allotted to particular subjects show learners what teachers and schools believe is important to them. Curricula should be drawn up in such way that they meet the demands of young people as well as providing them with skills they can use in various sectors of their society. Schools should also create a learning context that addresses the unique challenges, opportunities and aspirations of its teachers, learners and the community they serve.

Middlewood *et al.* (2005:45) argue that “if schools are genuinely going to take on the responsibility for creating and providing learning organisations, they must promote an environment which recognises and nurtures talent, celebrates initiatives and motivates individuals to embrace change.” Creating a learning organisation cannot be achieved through a one-sided initiative, but requires the support of all role players in the education sector, which includes students, teachers, schools, SGBs, service providers, parents, businesses and the local community. The desire to become a learning

organisation should first begin with schools and then support and guidance of the WCED and other stakeholders should be rigorously pursued. The challenging context in which many schools are forced to operate has put them under tremendous pressure to achieve. This challenging context has presented schools with a major responsibility and opportunity for contributing towards the establishment of learning organisations.

A learning organisation identifies and acknowledges all those who make a contribution to the learning experience and the training they require to do so. Moreover, if schools are to develop into learning organisations, they will need a school environment that is able to cope with the diverse learning needs of all learners and proactively engage in the changes and restructuring that are so characteristic of our time.

Van der Westhuizen and Mentz (2002:63) say that Christian educational reform suggests that “the school has always been typified as a societal relationship. With the advent of a new millennium, this view of the school has not altered.” In attempting to explain what a societal relationship is, van der Westhuizen and Mentz (2002:65) draw on Taljaard (1976:200), who “describes a societal relationship as that which comes into being when individuals bind themselves together for the purpose of fulfilling a special need or to realise a shared or communal interest... The societal relationship is created through the bonding of persons, in conjunction with the motive (mission) for the shared action.” In this regard I argue that the same meaningful relationship can be forged between the WCED, schools and local communities through a collaborative relationship. This relationship could lead to a powerful allegiance in the fulfilment of the WCED vision to develop schools into learning organisations.

3.12.5 Teachers’ contribution

Teachers are the building blocks and moral fibre on which an education system is built. As such, teachers should constantly be developed and appraised because an education system can never rise above its educators. Therefore Fullan (1993:13) posits that “each and every educator must strive to be an effective change agent.” If teachers hold on to the status quo and resist change, they have failed in their duty.

Educators need to constantly exert a positive influence with regards to change that supports reform.

A spirit of camaraderie should prevail amongst teachers to work together and accept shared responsibility. Improving the quality of teaching and learning should receive precedence above all other ventures. Teachers are aware that this postmodern dispensation enables learners to have better access to unlimited information through modern technology. Hence teachers should keep up with new educational developments and adapt to stimulating and innovative teaching methodologies that will meet the needs of students. Schools are faced with a moral dilemma and teachers should try to bring back the moral values that express the virtues of schooling.

Having said that, one cannot ignore the challenges teachers are facing in the Western Cape. Stress continues to be a major factor for many teachers in the Western Cape schools. Many of these stresses are related to the following issues:

- Poor school leadership and management;
- Lack of sufficient resources in schools and EMDCs;
- Non-cooperative or confrontational learner behaviour;
- Lack of relevant training to cope with OBE and current policies;
- Negative and unrealistic expectations of parents and principals.

3.12.6 Student contribution

Students in the Western Cape are faced with many societal problems. Teachers and leaders therefore need to understand students in order to connect with them. Chapman and Aspin (1997:289) believe that “there is a wide acceptance in schools that learners should accept a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning ... educating institutions will be increasingly pressed to ensure that people take responsibility for their own learning and for achieving the outcomes deemed important.” A learning organisation places a high value on student competence. However, student competence depends to a large extent on the attitude and willingness of students to take ownership of their own learning.

Dalin *et al.* (1994:21) argue that a good student outcome “can best be facilitated in a positive school and classroom climate with openness for learning and growth and with highly competent teachers.” Unfortunately this situation does not exist in many Western Cape schools because many teachers in this province must work under increasingly strenuous conditions to facilitate a positive school and classroom climate. I believe that this climate is possible with continual collaboration between schools, the WCED and parents. Student involvement is also crucial in the development and sustainability of a learning organisation.

A learning organisation makes use of processes that all individuals, including students, are capable of drawing on. It encourages participation and innovation within all its divisions. Within a learning organisation no individual can be denied learning and everyone is given a fair opportunity to develop and grow. The benefit of involving students in the decision making process is that they are more likely to become committed and participate more actively when they feel part of the education process. They may even inspire their peers to become involved. Their involvement may also give them a sense of belonging. When students are consulted, service will also be more organised around the needs of students.

Rudduck and Flutter (2004:13) draw on Levin (1999), who claims that “students ... want to have something to say about how they learn, when they learn, where they learn, and so on. Many matters that have traditionally been assumed to be the purview of the teachers will become instead matter to be discussed and negotiated with students.” Student organisations have been around for quite some time. However, to date there is no evidence of significant contribution to the education sector. It is up to the WCED to extend the role of student involvement in the decision-making process. Students also have to take a more proactive role in the decision-making process of their education.

3.12.7 Parents and community contribution

Schools belong to the community. Therefore parents and the community have a mutual interest in the development of their schools. As a former teacher, I have noted that parents’ involvement is more prevalent in a school environment where teachers

are committed to quality teaching and learning. As a result, schools should make full use of the community and parental resources that are available. Schools may even link with NGOs, community-based organisations and care givers to enhance their capacity. Schools are also part of the community. As such, schools should network with each other to extend and enhance resource capabilities. Fullan (2001:170) observed that “stimulating, coordinating and sustaining ‘coherent’ development across many schools is exceedingly difficult because it requires balancing top-down and bottom up forces.”

I argue that quality steering committees should establish guidelines for the development of learning organisations. It is in this regard that all departments within the WCED should set up mechanisms and coordinate its activities to connect schools with parents and the community, and to set up networks that will have mutual benefits for all role-players.

3.13 AN INTERPRETATION OF THE WCED AND OTHER ROLE PLAYERS

I have analysed three service delivery policies and considered how they support or fail in relation to the five constitutive elements. The outcome compelled me to look at the other sources that I deemed important in developing schools into learning organisations. I shall now use these five constitutive meanings as hermeneutical lenses to look at how the WCED’s service delivery policies as well as other role player’s involvement in the education process support schools to become learning organisations. I also wish to see how the WCED’s service delivery model contributes towards quality education and better support and service provision.

3.13.1 Quality teaching

As already mentioned in Chapter Two, giving classroom practice precedence would more likely contribute towards providing quality education. Moreover, if schools accept the responsibility of becoming more responsive, dynamic institutions that proactively engage with change, then educators must purposefully engage in the renewal process. Teachers are considered to be the key influence in shaping the minds

of learners. This shaping however, takes place on the classroom level. Professional development is an important prerequisite for initiating and sustaining school improvement. Therefore, professional teachers are needed to spearhead the development of learning organisations. Consequently, teachers have to regularly review the relevance of their teaching methodology. It is the WCED's duty, however, to create a platform for teacher development.

Teachers as practitioners need to provide cutting-edge teaching methodology and information that will enable students to meet the demands of businesses and society at these times. In order for them to do that, teachers need to understand their professional development and embrace the notion that development is a lifelong process. They also need to diagnose their learners' needs in terms of where they are now and where they want to go.

Teachers should inspire their learners to become more involved in their own education. They should spend less time imparting knowledge and spend more time in developing partnerships and mentoring their learners in unlocking their hidden potential. Hargreaves (1994:11) draws on information that "presumes that educational standards are low and young people are failing or dropping out because the practice of many teachers is deficient or misdirected." This holds true for many schools in the Western Cape, where the morale of teachers is at an all-time low and teachers are doing the bare minimum in order to cope with the administrative duties and stresses of the day.

I argue that the restructuring process of the WCED mainly follows a top-down approach, especially with regards to curricular matters and the aspect of the time policy. In an attempt to develop schools into learning organisations, as envisaged in the WCEDs foundation, the WCED's restructuring programme was geared toward sharing and retaining knowledge at institutional level.

Through the HCDS the WCED is hoping to provide quality teaching and learning in an attempt to create skills for learners to "engage in careers and jobs required by the growing Western Cape economy" (Nyalashe 2006:27). This notion embodies the belief that education can be used to fill any economic gaps in society. The

unemployment rate in the Western Cape is very high, coupled with the crime rate that is spiralling out of control. The ruling party now has to make good on their promises to satisfy their voters. Hence, the time is now for the ruling party to engage with and support educational reform that is based on quality education for all.

In all these social and political issues, education is used to address these challenges. As already argued elsewhere, the purpose of schools is not to provide employment and contribute to the economy. The fundamental purpose of schooling is to impart knowledge and moral skills, whereas the main purpose of marketing is to generate profit which makes marketing incompatible with the educational mission. Such a notion of a learning organisation is conceptually flawed and is less likely to develop schools into learning organisations.

To improve the quality of education and secure the safety of learners at schools, the WCED has undertaken a joint venture with Community Safety, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Health to reduce the impact of violence and to create a safe learning environment at schools that are crime hotspots. This entails improving school safety, training and supporting SGB members, and improving participation in and development of care support strategies for vulnerable children. After consultation with some schools I became aware of the safety programme that is operational at high-risk schools. The safety programme involves a collaborative venture between the WCED, Bambanani Security and the SAPS.

3.13.2 Inclusive education

The national Department of Education has placed the implementation of inclusive education “within a 20-year period” (Department of Education 2003:3). However, the WCED has made much progress with regards to inclusive education and training, considering that some provincial education departments do not even have funds for the recruitment and placement of out-of-school learners and thus avoid tackling the issue of inclusive education. In term of the WCED Annual Report 2006/2007, a new subsidy system was introduced to enable better access to Grade R learners and provide new teaching and learning kits to help learners to meet the requirements of

the national curriculum. The WCED has doubled the subsidy per child per school day on a sliding scale from R3 to R7 depending on a poverty index.

I noted that not much has been done to relieve the plight of the disabled and impaired learners in the Western Cape. Statistics indicate that the about 64 200 learners in South Africa who are disabled or impaired are accommodated at 380 special schools, but 280 000 disabled or impaired learners are still needed to be accommodated.

Effective inclusion of parents in school governance does not come easy. Much training and development are required to equip parents and community representatives to participate meaningfully in school governance. As a former member of a school governing body, I noticed that many parents lack information and skills to make judgments about school quality. Internal and external role players should understand what is expected of them to successfully contribute to school development. Through inclusive education the Western Cape schools and principals are increasingly make use of parents to take care of classes where teachers are absent. This not only incorporates parents into the education sector, but also creates a sense of ownership. Many formerly disadvantaged schools cannot afford to employ substitute and assistant teachers and therefore have to make use of parents. In some cases parents offer their services voluntarily, but in other cases the school governing bodies may offer a small remuneration.

3.13.3 Collaborative teamwork

In terms of the SDIP, the WCED hopes to synergise all its sectors in an attempt to introduce a more service beneficiary-focused service delivery model. The alignment of Head Office directorate with Circuit Teams, EMDCs and ultimately schools in an attempt to bring service delivery closer to learning institutions is indicative of the WCED's willingness to establish teamwork with other stakeholders. This means listening to the views of all relevant stakeholders when important decisions are to be made.

Developing schools into learning organisation requires appropriate restructuring. Consequently Hargreaves (1994:241) posits that restructuring should include "school-

based management, increased consumer choice, teacher empowerment and teaching for understanding.” These elements in combination may significantly contribute towards the development of a learning organisation, which will also bring about closer collaboration between the WCED, schools and their local communities.

Furthermore, Hargreaves (1994:241) draws on Lieberman and her colleagues’ observation that restructuring “aims to create schools that are more centred on learners’ needs for active, experiential, cooperative and culturally connected learning opportunities supportive of individual talents and learning styles. Restructuring aims to create these learning opportunities within school organisations energised by collaborative inquiry, informed by authentic accountability and guided by shared-decision-making.” I posit that restructuring that is not based on collaborative participation and does not focus on the needs of learners is a recipe for failure.

Parents are also part of the school community and are largely contributing to the development of learners and schools. Chapman and Aspin (1997:286) observed that “In the past schools have in general been compartmentalised, too shut away from the community, with many of them having an attitude of erecting barriers to keep outsiders excluded.” In these turbulent times schools are beginning to realise more and more their dependence upon parents and the community. Parents and communities are showing more interest in the governance of their children’s school.

By forging collaborative partnership with parents and the community, schools as learning organisations can learn better how to respond to the needs of their children and the community. Fullan (2003:17) argues that “the public is dissatisfied and anxious about the failure of the school system to keep up, but this means they want to help fix it not abandon it.” This holds true for many Western Cape communities, where parents and the community want to play an active role in the daily running of schools.

The membership of an organisation reflects the diversity of perspectives and approaches needed for the sustainability of that organisation. It is therefore consistent to argue that strategic and collaborative alliances between schools and the community will enhance teaching and learning practices and transform schools into learning

organisations. These alliances will forge new partnerships with schools and communities that can hold reciprocal benefits for both them. For this to happen communities need leaders who can creatively join and sustain these collaborative relationships. The results are far-reaching for both schools and the community.

Foster *et al.* (1997:31, 32) highlight some possible needs:

- Know where to locate information about social, economic, political and technological trends with potential influence on the evolution of schools;
- Be able to identify from such information, with their communities and professional colleagues, which trends are most likely to have significant consequences for the evolution of schools;
- Be able to facilitate their communities and professional colleagues in the analysis of data concerning these trends for the purpose of determining their most likely consequences for both the goals of schools and the means of operation;
- Know about the range of alternative organisational designs that could be used in order to refine the design of their school in response to significant trends;
- Be able to facilitate their communities and professional colleagues in reviewing alternative organisational designs and deciding on the nature of refinements needed to their schools' design;
- Be able to assist their communities and professional colleagues in the implementation of refinements in the design of their schools;
- Be able to assist their communities and professional colleagues in monitoring the effects of their organisational redesign initiatives and making appropriate adjustments.

If these needs can be met, schools would not only forge new collaborative relationships but also develop a shared vision. Since learners are part of the community, they can contribute towards the WCED's objective to retain learners in schools.

3.13.4 Communication

In an attempt to improve communication through its service provision model, the WCED is also expecting its directors to reduce duplication of services and provide effective and efficient communication between all levels in the education sector. This initiative requires teamwork. Embracing communication as notion of deliberative democracy means talking, listening and interacting with all relevant stakeholders especially educators while moving away from the current authoritative service provision model. This means finding a way where all relevant stakeholders become involve through a mechanism that offers at least some decision-making powers over important matters.

The WCED's usage of certain terminology like Back Office, Front Office, service beneficiary and learning organisation points to the commercialisation of the education system. My argument is that the use of these concepts points to a neoliberal culture that is systematically infused into the education system.

To transform schools effectively into learning organisations requires proper and ongoing communication between the WCED, EMDCs and schools, but not as an end in itself. It has to be understood that policy in itself cannot develop schools into learning organisations. The initiative and motivation to become a learning organisation should ultimately come from schools. However, Riley (1998:16,17) draws on Kogan (1978), who posits that “education is a gigantic case study of how increased social and individual activity and commitment – more expenditure, more building, more people, and more political support – do not necessarily lead to satisfaction and success.”

3.13.5 Power

It appears that the education restructuring programme in the Western Cape has some major political economic overtones that can be located in a neoliberal paradigm. Following the Polokwane election, the Rasool government in the Western Province came under increasing pressure to align itself with a specific political principle. In an attempt to sustain his position, the Western Cape Premier used his authority to push

an agenda that would secure political alignment. The WCED as a department within the Western Cape provincial government was subtly coerced into a restructuring programme aimed at injecting equity into the top structure of the WCED. So the Western Cape Provincial government, with the consent of the WCED, used its power to coerce the WCED into a restructuring initiative.

I use the word 'consent' in the context of Busher's (2006:34) understanding that "Power cannot be projected successfully unless those being led give their consent, whether that is derived willingly or by coercion." In this context I therefore argue that the WCED's submission to political coercion by power may significantly impede the development of schools into learning organisation.

Welton (2001:175) draws on a Task Team report on Education Management Development (Department of Education 1996c) who posits that, "management is not an end in itself but an essential part in achieving the central goal of promoting effective teaching and learning." If the WCED's central goal is to promote effective and efficient teaching and learning, then their service provision model should be geared towards empowering teachers and learners. This then makes teachers and learners the central point of restructuring.

3.14 CODING OF DATA

The following grid gives a reconciliatory account of how the policies link with the constitutive meanings as constructed from the literature. All policies are listed against the five constitutive meanings to ascertain whether they subscribe to the constitutive elements. This would enable me to understand the conceptual framework in which these policies have been constructed.

Themes	Interview Head Office	Interview EMDC Directors	Interview Circuit Teams	Interview School Principals	Interview Teachers
Quality Education	•	•	•	•	•
Inclusive Education	•	•	•	•	
Collaborative Teamwork	•	•	•	•	
Communication			•		
Power	•	•	•	•	•

3.14.1 Analysis of grid

From the grid it appears that the intension of all the listed policies are to provide quality education. The analysis however, shows the contrary. As argued previously, communication constitutes the building blocks upon which all constitutive meanings are built upon. The lack of communication compromises the development of schools into learning organisation. The grid shows a big flaw in the communicative processes of the policies. This means that a broad consultation has not been considered, but that some policies are imposed on practitioners.

If the WCED is to assist schools into developing learning organisations, serious consideration should be given to rectifying the communicative processes. The reality in many Western Cape schools is that quality education remains largely unchanged. I contend that the challenges that still exist in schools could be ascribe to the WCEDs managerialist approach to service provision, and the lack of proper consultation, supporting and mentoring schools through the education process. The constitutive

meaning of power features prominently in all listed policies. However, power is not always displayed in a positive way. As far as inclusive education is concerned, the building of more schools and the establishment of institutions for learners with special educational needs as well as the extension of no-school fee policies made is a welcome contribution to make schools inclusive and accessible to learners in poor communities.

Also, with the amount of autonomy and scope given to SGBs, the issue of school marketisation was expanded. This extended exclusive education as SGBs rigorously promote their schools as meeting an ideal educator-learner ratio. Many former model C schools largely remain more resourced than schools in formerly disadvantaged areas that cannot afford to employ educators to reduce their educator-learner ratio that is so crucial to improve the quality of education. Furthermore, learners remain largely excluded from former model C schools on the basis of their academic achievement and lack of funds.

Collaboration as constitutive meaning features in four of the five policies selected. However, it is used very selectively and remains absent in crucial matters. For example, in a section of the HCDS policy that aims to improve the conditions of education, a QIDS UP management team was appointed to oversee this initiative. No mention is made of any practitioners in the team and no collaborative process is mentioned with local schools about how they perceive the conditions of education or what improvement initiative is needed to suite their individual needs.

The two constitutive meanings, namely quality education and power, feature in all policies that were analysed. Even though they may feature in all policies, this does not necessarily reflect the intended outcome hoped for. In the case of the time policy, quality education and power as constitutive meanings have some undesirable influence on education, even though the policy was constructed with good intentions. Furthermore, the element of power functions fairly negatively in the policy on time, as it causes a large amount of tension between educational practitioners and the WCED officials. Communication as a constitutive meaning, even though indirectly referred to in some policies, remains under-weighted.

3.15 EDUCATIONALLY MARGINALISED CHILDREN

In spite of restructuring and the extensive educational progress made by the WCED, there still remain children who are marginalised from access to basic and quality education. The educationally marginalised children are those who for some reason cannot get into school, or may have difficulty into doing so, and learners who drop out prematurely because of unforeseen reasons. As already mentioned elsewhere, learners have been denied access to quality educational institutions on the basis of financial obligations or intellectual capacity. It became clear in an interview with WCED officials that learners are the most important service beneficiaries. Also, the concept of learner is not just limited to school learners. However, it remains a concern that learners who have not been successful in Grade 10 are pushed out of the education system because of their age and intellectual capacity.

There is no doubt that access to basic education has increased substantially. However, the phrase “basic education” further needs clarification. The needs of society have changed significantly, while the scope of “basic education” has remained unchanged. Some years back individuals could get a good public and corporal office job with a Matric Certificate. These days you need a Matric Certificate to work in a clothing factory. Our country is experiencing a significant qualification escalation level and I feel that what was “basic” ten years ago is no longer basic today.

3.16 SUMMARY

In this chapter I have analysed the WCED policy documents against the five constitutive meanings to determine whether the WCED service provision model is sufficient to develop schools into learning organisations. Through the policy analysis and the literature review I have noted that developing schools into learning organisations requires wide and collaborative participation of schools, learners, parents, the community and the WCED. This issue is a widely contested in schools throughout the Western Cape. All these stakeholders’ contribution should be carefully synchronised to achieve a common outcome. Therefore constructing policy for a service delivery model should follow a comprehensive path that is linked to the needs

of classroom practice; it needs to be collaborative and most importantly, address the needs of the main service beneficiaries, namely the learners.

In looking at these policy documents, I have noted that the intended outcome of all these policies relates to focusing on the main service beneficiary, namely the learner. However, I found that the outcome is not always realised as intended. For example, the time policy intended to give learners maximum exposure to teaching and learning. On closer investigation I found that the time policy impacts negatively on teacher development and training, and in fact increased the workload of teachers, thus, adversely affecting the intended outcome. Furthermore, there is considerable evidence to suggest that all these policies relate to some of the constitutive elements I have constructed.

However, I have also noted that some constitutive meanings do not feature in some policies, where they could have had a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning or the implementation the policy. I am aware that these constitutive elements may features in other policies. However, I argue that the foundation of the constitutive meanings namely communication is not adequately address and if given more consideration, it may give imputes to quality teaching and learning. I therefore conclude that these five constitutive meanings with communication as its foundation create the necessary condition to assist schools becoming learning organisations.

Educational changes and developments are sometimes characterised by political manoeuvring and impasses, especially in the Western Cape with its strong opposition stronghold. The restructuring programme was an initiative that came from provincial government. The WCED as a department within the provincial government was mandated to restructure in an attempt to infuse equity within its top structure of the WCED. What has happened in the Western Cape is that political and ideological realignment may have occurred that the WCED may not even be aware of. Interestingly, shortly after the interviews were conducted, the premier of the Western Cape vacated his office in the provincial government and two subsequent premiers took over. The last premier took office with new political persuasions which may also affect the WCED.

I also noted that the overall aim of the service delivery policies as discussed is designed to provide quality service through more physical and human resources, to set targets for better education outcomes, and to create a safe learning environment for all learners in the Western Cape. Policies and the service delivery model serve as the main instruments to achieve these objectives. From the policies I noted that the WCED aims to develop schools only through greater availability of resources and better infrastructure. This approach to developing schools into learning organisations points to a managerialist agenda. I argue that with all five constitutive elements firmly enshrined in the service delivery model and the policies, the possibility of schools becoming learning organisations may be greatly enhanced.

I also argue that the educational restructuring process is too far removed from the real beneficiaries, the learners. As a result I believe the restructuring will mainly promote the political objectives of the provincial government of the Western Cape by infusing equity into the top management of the WCED. A critique that can be levelled against the restructuring is that it uses education as deeply instrumental in political ways. In the Western Cape it appears that education is used to service an economic objective, which is not the rationale for education. Furthermore, education does not directly service the economic objectives. It can only service economic objectives indirectly.

The WCED accepted the provincial government's proposal of equity and redress and developed an HCDS to bring this to fruition over a period of two years. The concept of learning organisation comes not only from the HCDS, but developed out of the reculturing, reorientation and reorganisation of the WCED. Fundamentally, the starting conceptual point – which is the conditions, context at schools and ways in which those contexts fundamentally reorganise schooling – become a situation of political instability and resource minimalisation.

My argument therefore has been that a restructuring programme that did not consider the micro context of classroom practice will therefore achieve little to develop schools into learning organisations. Finally, I conclude that in spite of good progress being made by the WCED, the education climate in the Western Cape is still not favourable for addressing the needs of vulnerable and marginalised children and will continue to favour high-achievement schools.

CHAPTER 4

INTERVIEWS WITH ROLE PLAYERS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I shall make use of semi-structured interviews to generate qualitative data. Through the use of interviews as a methodological tool, this chapter aims to explore the perceptions of relevant stakeholders in the education process regarding the service delivery model and who interviewees regard as the main beneficiaries of this service delivery model. I also aim to ascertain whether the WCED's service delivery model is up to the task of contributing towards schools developing into learning organisations. The idea, as May (2002:10) puts it is to "uncover the perceptions, motives and accounts that people offer for their actions and beliefs." Through these interviews I aim to ascertain why the WCED Head Office and EMDCs are using a particular service delivery model and whether it is congruent with their objective to turn schools into learning organisations.

During the course of this research the number of EMDCs was increased from seven to eight and the name EMDC was subsequently changed to District Offices from July 2008. The name change did not signify any structural change, but was only done to reflect the district in which it was located. For the purpose of this research I will retain the term EMDC and from time to time refer to it as the District Office.

4.2 RATIONALE FOR INTERVIEWS

The rationale for using interviews as a methodological instrument is to contextualise education in the Western Cape and to make connections between policy and practice. It is also to provide a broader understanding of practitioners' perspectives and their response to the WCED's service provision model. Furthermore, it is necessary to ascertain how the WCED's service provision model impacts on schools and learners, who are the main service beneficiaries. The interviews can also indicate how the EMDCs, Circuit Teams and Head Office' service provision model contribute towards

schools becoming learning organisations. Finally, the interviews will help us to understand if adequate monitoring and evaluation are done with regards to implementing policies.

This chapter gives a narrative account of interviews conducted with the relevant stakeholders in the education process and then provides a data analysis on the interview data. All data were first collected and then coded to look for themes corresponding to the five constitutive elements as well as emerging themes that may arise out of the interviews. After the coding was done an interpretive report was written on the process. The interviewees who were selected included members of the senior management team at Head Office, EMDC directors, Circuit Teams, school principals, teachers and student representative council members. To understand the complexities of service delivery it is necessary to examine the intricacies of the lives of those involved in the service delivery process. These interviews will provide the opportunity to examine how the WCED service delivery model is experienced, interpreted and ultimately shaped by those involved in the education process.

4.3 INTERVIEW METHOD

The interviews had a semi-structured format and were related to role players' experience of teaching and teachers, the role they play in the education process and the kind of model of professionalism to which they subscribe. The assumption is that "it is possible to investigate elements of the social by asking people to talk, and to gather or construct knowledge by listening to and interpreting what they say and how they say it" (Mason 2002:225). It is in this framework that I conducted interviews with the intention to construct knowledge about how role players perceive and respond to the WCED service delivery model.

Education takes place in a social setting and is therefore a social activity. It is for this reason that I used interviews as a methodological tool to interpret how and why the WCED chose a particular service delivery model to turn schools into learning organisations. By asking questions and constructing interpretations, one can uncover the context in which the education process takes place and therefore understand how quality education can be constructed.

May (2002:1) draws on May (2001), who argues that “data are produced, not collected, and it is the process of production that is fundamentally related to the product.” As such, this chapter aims to produce data that will show the link between the WCED’s service delivery model and learning organisations as portrayed in the literature. I first give a narrative account of the data collected, then I do an analysis and finally I do the verification and draw a conclusion. In the verification process I shall look for patterns and themes, and do triangulation with the policy documents and the five constitutive meanings that I have identified. Denzin (1998:313) posits that “In social sciences there is only interpretation. Nothing speaks for itself.” This notion led me to interpreting the interview data against the background of the policy documents and the constitutive meanings.

4.3.1 Purpose of questions

The questions are aimed at understanding participants’ perceptions from their own frame of reference and their responses could help to uncover the nature of the service delivery model adopted by Head Office, EMDCs and Circuit Teams, and how their service delivery intervention impacts on classroom teaching. These interview questions and answers can contribute towards shaping my conceptual understanding of the education processes in the WCED. Ultimately, their understanding of the reality shapes what is happening in the education processes.

4.3.2 Data analysis

The purpose of analysing interview data is to highlight themes, patterns and issues that may emerge from the interviews. It is also necessary to triangulate the interview data to look for conceptual links with the constitutive elements that I have highlighted from the literature review, WCED policies and the world of work to see how these links address the central issue of how the WCED’s service delivery model assists schools in become learning organisations. I shall then present a data analysis grid that will enable me to organise my qualitative data in order to facilitate report writing.

4.4 RESEARCH SAMPLE

My research method is qualitative and I make use of semi-structured interviews. Interviewees were selected in all three tiers of the WCED, namely Head Office, EMDCs and schools. Because of geographical and time constraints, as well as space, only twenty-one individuals were interviewed for this inquiry. The interviewees were chosen strategically to provide data that focus mainly on service provision issues. The reason for this is because the strength or weakness of the service provision model would give me an indication of the strength or weakness of the instrument the WCED is using to assist schools becoming learning organisations. In some cases random sampling was done, especially where a large number of respondents were available – for example, teachers, circuit team members and learners. The interviewees who were selected included three directors in certain departments within head office, two EMDC directors, three Circuit Team members, and four school principals, including primary and high schools and two teachers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted over a period of five months in 2008.

The interviews took approximately 30 to 45 minutes, and were all tape-recorded. Interviewees were selected on the basis of their involvement in the education process, their hierarchical position in the service provision model as well as their contribution and commitment towards education in general in the Western Cape. Interviewees were selected on all three tiers of the WCED and male and female interviewees were selected to provide a balanced view with regards to gender issues. Furthermore, schools were selected to reflect on different cultures, environments and views.

All primary and secondary schools that were selected were from previously disadvantaged communities. This is because previously disadvantaged schools are mostly in need of quality education and need more interventions than former model-C school. The interview meetings all took place at the venue of the participants' choice in order to achieve a more secured interview environment for the interviewees.

Before conducting the interviews, I had to apply officially to the WCED research directorate to obtain permission for conducting interviews at Head Office, EMDCs

and schools (see Annexure A). I then had to carefully select the interviewees from three EMDCs and decide on what basis they were to be selected. After the selection process a telephonic appointment was made with the respondents to schedule interview times. On the day of the interview a document of agreement was issued to all interviewees to be signed before conducting the interviews (See Annexure B). This document contains the confidentiality clause and states the use of data for the purpose of this dissertation.

Interview questions were drawn up before the interview. Questions were constructed based on data needed for understanding the WCEDs service provision model that is use a tool to assist schools in becoming learning organisations and with the aim to understand how these participants' views map onto the policies. A semi-structured interview was used to make provision for follow-up questions that allow for flexibility in the interview process. The interview process does not always work out as anticipated. Hence, I needed to acknowledge a few issues that may influence the quality of the interview data. These issues were taken into account when the interpretation was done. In an interview paradigm the word subjectivity is crucial, because the interviewee's opinion is subjective about what goes on in reality.

The interview data reflect perceptions and concerns of the interviewees at that point in time where some of the restructuring was still in progress and where new appointees still had to adjust to their new roles. The interview visits took place at an early stage of restructuring and further phases were still to be undertaken. Therefore this research could serve as a useful baseline for further studies in the WCED restructuring plans.

4.5 LIMITATIONS OF INTERVIEWS

No research instrument is without flaws. Fontana and Frey (2008:645) posit that “The spoken or written word always has a residue of ambiguity, no matter how carefully we word the questions and how carefully we report or code the answers.” Sometimes the responses of interviewees may not always reflect the true situation for various reasons. They may be in an undesirable emotional state, or they may respond in ways that defend their organisation.

Sometimes the instruments used for interviews may be faulty or information may get lost for several reasons. Interviews can also be very time consuming and many challenges can occur, especially if the interviewer does not have an insider (a person within the organisation) who can help him avoid these challenges. Sometimes the interviewer may unconsciously exert an influence by manipulating or misconstruing the data. It should also be noted that the number of respondents interviewed is not fully representative of the total views held by all relevant role players. Nevertheless, given the level of detail, I argue that it is possible to draw a general insight into views held by different role-players at different levels of the education system in the Western Cape.

4.6 REPORT ON INTERVIEWS

I now give a narrative account of the interviews conducted with Head Office directors, EMDC directors, Circuit Team members, school principals and teachers. The reason for giving a narrative account is that those being researched can also be heard through direct quotations of what they actually said. I then analyse the interview data against the five constitutive meanings. Interview questions can be found in Annexure C.

4.6.1 Head Office interviews

Four directors were interviewed in four different directorates at the WCED Head Office. For reasons of confidentiality these directorates cannot be named. I will first transcribe the interviews and then analyse the transcribed text.

4.6.1.1 Head Office: Director 1

Question 1: What is the outcome the WCED hopes to achieve with regards to the macro and micro structure?

“The final outcome should be the education of the learner. When I say learner this not only means children, but also our ABET and Special learners that could benefit. Learners that will be able to fulfil their role in society. So that they can become

educated and civilised. That is the final outcome. Before redesign, the alignment was not so effective. When I say alignment I am referring to the Head Office, with its directorates and the District Officers with their pillars. So if I say alignment, then a particular directorate at Head Office must align with a particular pillar at EMDC. They in turn must align advice or connect with the schools. In essence our job at Head Office is enabling the district offices to operate properly so that they can enable the schools in turn to operate properly.”

Question 2: Can I conclude that the main beneficiary in this situation would be the learner?

“Yes. The learner is the ultimate service beneficiary.”

Question 3: Did Head Office succeed in reducing the hierarchical structure as envisaged in its foundation?

“This is research and I have to be open and honest. This is my personal opinion. I am not so sure. Of course you need the different levels, people in authority. I know that it was a definite aim, but it is still in a sense not so easy, for instance, to go and speak to senior management staff. There are these line functions. There is a lot of emphasis on line function and how you should approach seniors. For instance; you can’t just go straight up to the Superintendent General. Maybe it is just for order and discipline. I have to admit, they are quite open. I have often spoken to Mr Swartz and others and there was no problem; they would listen to you. There are some times where time is of the essence, where you don’t have the time to go through all the protocol. Of course correct planning is important. Sometimes even with correct planning things happen and you can’t speak to the person. To me the hierarchical structure is not as streamlined as it should be.”

Question 4: Do you think restructuring is geared towards improving classroom practice?

“I would say that the ultimate aim was that. The Head Office has now been expanded, because we have more directorates now. There is also another district, which is good.

The Circuits will also be changed now. We are still going to do that. It means that there will now be fewer schools per circuit. I think it would be possible for Curriculum Advisers particularly to visit more schools even though the educators do not always welcome these visits.”

“There should also be a change in the mindset of educators to see Curriculum Advisers for their advice and not policing. They cannot advise educators if they don’t know what they are doing. So, there must be classroom observation. If they notice something wrong, they can present new advice or methodology. We at Head Office should also be aware of the fact that if we sit and prepare a policy or work on a document, it is not an end in itself. This document must eventually be to the benefit of some people. We must remember that when we work on a paper, there are people behind the paper and they must benefit from it. So, if we prepare something at Head Office, it must be the learner that must benefit from it.”

Question 5: Do you experience any policy gaps between Head Office and EMDCs?

“There is still this gap. This is where the alignment comes in. The alignment aims to bring departments into harmony so that duplication of work can be eliminated.”

Question 6: Do you think that the WCED is doing enough to provide quality education in the Western Cape?

“The WCED is an institution that is committed to the idea of providing quality education, but I don’t think that the WCED is ultimately and entirely responsible for the results the children produce. I think that the quality of education also requires parental involvement. It depends on the socio-economic status of a number of people, parents, care givers and a large percentage of this population earns below R5000.00 a month. So that poses particular challenges. Whiles the WCED is committed to quality education and its mission to provide quality education, it is severely compromise by the people.”

Question 7: *Do you think that circuit teams are adequately equipped to deliver quality service?*

“I think the circuit teams are a good point of departure and I don’t think that anyone is adequately equipped at any one specific time to deal with the conditions we are faced with in the world. It’s a very fast and dynamic place and the world is changing very, very quickly. The impression I get is that these people will have to continuously be trained and they have to train themselves to understand the very complex educational environment. Schools are changing rapidly. Individuals within the schools are changing rapidly, being influenced by technology. So, that idealistic Dewey school that we all aspire to and we like to see all over this province does not exist. It is a very different educational landscape.”

4.6.1.2 Head Office: Director 2

Question 1: *What is the outcome the WCED hope to achieve with regards to the macro and micro structure?*

“Our final outcome is to provide quality service and support to EMDCs and schools in order to meet our ultimate objective and that is quality education.”

Question 2: *Can I conclude that the main beneficiary in this situation would be the learner?*

“The learner is our main service beneficiary”

Question 3: *Did Head Office succeed in reducing the hierarchical structure as envisaged in its foundation?*

“We have flattened our hierarchical system and experience better coordination between the different departments within our head office as well as levels in the WCED.”

Question 4: What is the main purpose of the HCDS?

“The purpose of the policy is to create an understanding that the people in the education community – namely the public servants and the teachers – to understand that there is a relationship between what they do and the economy. Also, that we need to create the conditions for quality education so that we can be able to provide the skills that the country needs. I also think what the HCDS does makes people aware of the weaknesses and strength of the system with a view to addressing the weaknesses and creating further development of good practices. So essentially the HCDS is about advocacy, creating awareness with the purpose of creating the conditions to meet the labour challenges as a long-term goal and in the short term to ensure quality education in school so we can arrive at that purpose.”

Question 5: How does the HCDS relate to classroom practice?

“I think what it does: it provides teachers in classrooms with knowledge so that they can develop an understanding of why they are doing what they are doing. It provides them with a kind of educational sense about what they need to do and what the reality in the country and the education system is. I think it is very useful knowledge, because you must remember that many teachers were trained in a different era where wider sociological factors, historical factors and contextual factors were quite irrelevant in the teaching and learning environment.”

Question 6: Having said that, I have noted that the restructuring process started at HO and not in classrooms, where the main service beneficiary is located?

“Any education system requires systemic shifts and system development that would enable the system to perform and one of the shortcomings in the review done in the Western Cape was that there were gaps at Head Office level and at district level. The school teacher/pupil ratios are something that has already been worked out and so you had gaps in service delivery at district level and HO level, and so therefore they began with the HO so that they could fill those gaps; for example, there was a need for a planning section and they developed a planning section. There was a need to fill posts in ECD and other core areas and that has been done.”

Question 7: *Would you agree that the HCDS policy is a political policy that serves the interest of the ANC provincial government?*

“Well, the ANC is the ruling government. The policy has to be in the interest of the government. But the HCDS is not very far from the national Human Resource Development Strategy (HRDS). Every policy is political. No policy is neutral, you know that.”

Question 8: *Should it not be up to us as service providers, practitioners to make sure that there is some sort of balance between education and politics?*

“Politics is never extricated from education. Education is deeply political. There is no neutral position on any matter, especially education. Education is a much contested view. It is very political.”

Question 9: *Do you think that a neoliberalist approach is necessarily the best approach for educational development?*

“You see, we are working with a particular reality in the world and SA is a developing economy. You can adopt other approaches that may not be relevant to the context. The context informs the approach you undertake or choose. So, you are left with very few choices. You can choose a Marxist approach to teaching and learning. You can choose an approach to teaching and learning that focuses entirely on the need to acquire skills, knowledge and values entirely for its own purpose. Universities are highly differentiated. Technikons are highly differentiated. FET colleges are highly differentiated.”

“Why are they differentiated? Why are teachers, education faculties and humanities so much part of a bigger picture? Why do you have so many scientists being trained? Why do you have so many B.Comm students being trained? There is obviously a purpose. I am a proponent of pursuing knowledge to improve the conditions in society. That is a very altruistic, socialistic position on knowledge, but I live in the world. I

work for an organisation that is part of an economic system and therefore you have to subscribe to that system.”

4.6.1.3 Head Office: Director 3

Question 1: Can I assume that the WCED support provision acknowledges the learner as the main service beneficiary?

“Of course the learner is the main beneficiary. The entire system is structured in such a way that you want learners to actually make a contribution in the final analysis and therefore learners must receive a quality education.”

Question 2: Do you think restructuring is geared towards improving classroom practice?

“The WCED is a dynamic organisation with unique circumstance. We have to employ a strategy that best suits our needs. Our system operates in an economic environment. So, we prescribe to what the system responds too.”

Question 3: Do you think that Circuit teams are adequately equipped to deliver quality service?

“There are ongoing training programmes that circuit team members have to attend and this is regularly planned by head office. The education system is developing very fast and schools have to keep up with these dynamic changes very, very quickly. The department is committed to ongoing training programmes and different teams go for training as it is arranged. We may not have the amount of time we wish for, but you have to understand they too have their workload. Multifunctional teams have their work cut out for them and they are coping with it.

“All circuit team members are individuals who have been in the system for a very long time. With their level of expertise and the continual support from the nation and provincial education system, I am convinced they are adequately equipped for the task at hand.”

Question 4: *How would you describe the collaborative relationship between Head Office and EMDCs?*

“I think there is no ideal collaboration. There is always an attempt to ensure that there is a good working relationship. But as you and I know, working relationships are influenced by human resources, personalities, how people interpret policy, they are influenced by management styles and leadership, they are influenced by a number of factors. We always are hoping and working towards improving that relationship.”

Question 5: *The aspect of time is a precious commodity. Do you think that enough time is allocated for teacher development?*

“It is obviously the most important resource in the province and the country. I don’t think enough time is allocated for training and professional development of teachers. I think that is one area that we need to work on.”

Question 6: *Do you think there is a gap between the policy of inclusive education and practice?*

“I think there are always gaps between policy and practice. Inclusive education is a policy that was first meant to be tested in particular ways. Once the system has learned from that test, it would then go system wide, depending on its resources. So, I think that the system has intended for the entire 30 000 schools in the country to be inclusive. It’s a short-, medium- and long-term approach that is clearly explained in the White Paper.”

Question 7: *So. Do you think that the WCED is doing enough to develop inclusive education?*

“I think the WCED is committed to inclusive education and the WCED has done quite a bit of work in the area. I am not in a position to give you a definite answer on that, because I haven’t looked at any evaluation reports regarding the success or failures of White Paper 6.”

4.6.1.4 Interpretation of data

All four directors within the WCED head office agreed that the ultimate achievement of policies is to establish quality teaching with learners as one put it “the ultimate service beneficiary”. Some agreed that collaborative teamwork between Head Office, EMDCs and schools is not ideal. They also agreed that this collaboration will always be influenced by resources, policy interpretation, management and leadership styles. What I deduced from these interviews is that communicative processes are lagging behind. This further indicates a lack of congruence between the objectives of Head Office officials and that of EMDCs.

At this point I can already offer a justification for arguing for deliberative democracy with its roots in “equal interest of all” (Habermas, 1996:306). The lack of congruence between the three tiers within the WCED indicates that deliberative democracy has a significant role to play in the communicative aspect in the WCEDs service provision model. If quality teaching is to be achieved, misrepresentation and distortion of information will have to be illuminated. As Fearson (1998:48) correctly observed, the “pathological outcome would disappear if individuals were allowed to discuss matters first.” A deliberative democratic approach to service provision enable stakeholders to express their preferences and facilitate better understanding of divergent or conflicting interests. It also creates an opportunity to combine capabilities through communication and so increase not only better understanding but also making good choices.

Furthermore, the directors see the HCDS as a policy aimed at creating quality education for all learners. Power is an inevitable feature in any organisation and the WCED is no exception. I have noted that significant power is vested in the hands of Head Office directorates. Power played a significant role in the establishment of an additional directorate and the appointment of ECD posts. Another theme that emerged from the interviews is that the WCED has to subscribe to the economic system within which it operates.

One director defended the WCEDs neoliberalist approach by stating they have to operate within the economic environment the education system finds itself. This is an affirmation of an education system that subscribes to commercialisation and privatisation, with its emphasis on marketisation and competitiveness. I argue that in this neoliberalist approach to education the role of the WCED has changed from provider to monitor and regulator.

Another theme that also emerged from the interviews was that our education system is dynamic and develops very fast. This would constitute regular reflection and dialogue between the WCED, EMDCs and schools. Reflection and dialogue forms the basis of a learning organisation. As a result there will always be a need for more training and development. This compounds the budgetary constraints that already complicate the service provision model.

All three directors agreed that the aspect of time needed much more consideration. One director emphasised the WCED Head Office's commitment to quality education, but admits the challenge with regards to adequate training and development time. Furthermore, he claimed that quality education is a joint venture between the WCED, schools and parents. He then claimed that parents are severely compromising the mission to provide quality education, through their lack of commitment. This could be a debatable issue, considering the prevailing high unemployment rate and some parents who experience serious financial challenges. On the issue of inclusive education it was said that the WCED is doing its bit, but gaps between policy and practice will always exist. The issue of communication was left untouched, although one director briefly mentioned an advocacy programme. Advocacy is a one-way communication that leaves very little room for interaction.

Throughout my encounter with the directors at Head office I noted their commitment and/or reference to some of the constitutive meanings, which they believed were important. The issue of communication did not receive much attention. Three new themes emerged from these interviews. Firstly, the WCED education system is dynamic and requires vibrant interaction and consistent development. Secondly, the WCED operates in a specific economic environment and therefore subscribes to an economic – i.e. the neoliberalist – approach to education. Finally, all policies are

political, because the education is highly political. This is not an uncommon perception; as Theron (2002:187) states “Education is located in the area of social contestation, and as such is always political.” It is because of the political paradigm in which education operates that deliberative democracy may provide a more transparent perspective on educational matters and justifying a particular service delivery model.

4.6.1.5 Conclusion

All interviewees generally defended the WCED’s policy initiatives and service delivery model, but admitted that gaps that may exist between policy and practice. On the basis of the data collected during my interview sessions with WCED directors, I noted some congruence between the director’s perception about the WCEDs service delivery model and policies. One director felt that the WCED does not fully comply with its policy initiatives; two felt that there is an overall commitment to quality service and teaching. Because conceptual analysis is deeply data driven, I had to conclude that the WCED is committed to developing schools into learning organisations. What is a possible source of difficulties, however, is that the WCED sees itself as a dynamic organisation always moving forward. This would mean that the WCED may move ahead of some schools that are not at their level of progressive development.

There is an overall commitment to most of the constitutive meanings that would support schools to become learning organisations. Through these interview sessions at Head Office I found that the communicative processes between the four departments that I had investigated within the WCED is fairly well linked with regards the overall vision of the WCED. This means that on the WCED Head Office level, they appear well-structured and geared towards a single purpose. However, I found the extension of this vision to the other two tiers namely between head office and schools to be totally inadequate.

A major limitation in the communication model of the WCED is the amount of coercion that exists from head office down to local schools. EMDCs are coerced into promulgating head office policies which further extend down to school level. This is counterproductive and incompatible with the principle of communicative deliberation.

Habermas (1996:305) posits that “deliberations are free of any external...internal coercion.” A communicative deliberative idea of democracy embraces the idea of inclusive participation and can be used to alter the inadequate understanding of the WCEDs concept of a learning organisation. When stakeholders participate, they take ownership and ownership enhances legitimation. The education environment in EMDC and school are significantly different as that of head office. Also, much more resources and service intervention is needed on EMDC and school level. Furthermore, the element of power sharing and communication still needs extensive consideration in the building up of trust so that power can be shared with EMDCs and schools.

4.6.2 EMDCs

These interviews were conducted on the second tier of the WCED. Because of geographical and time constraints only two EMDC directors were interviewed. EMDCs or Education District Offices as they are now called are the executive leg of the service provision location and EMDC directors are the driving forces behind these service provision. As such the success of developing schools into learning organisations is largely dependent upon the decisions taken by EMDC directors and the support and guidance given to circuit teams. Below is a narrative account of an interview conducted with EMDC directors.

4.6.2.1 EMDC Director 1

Question 1: How many components are there within an EMDC?

“We have the EMDC director and on the next tier we have our circuit team leader’s senior curriculum adviser, senior circuit manager, senior school psychologist and a senior person for the admin component. Each EMDC has four components, namely the psychological component, institutional management and governance component, curriculum component and administration component. As a full EMDC we meet at least twice a term. After servicing schools we submit our reports to the top five and discuss with them independently our plan of action and the how and why of our interventions.”

Question 2: How would you describe the relationship between Head Office and EMDCs with regards to collaboration?

“Let me start by saying that the concept EMDCs does not exist anymore. As from July 1, 2008 after the redesign, EMDCs were increased to eight to bring them in line with the eight districts in the Western Cape and subsequently changed to District Offices to bring them in line with the national policy, where it should be named after its districts. The policy and work remained the same; only a name change.”

“Our relationship varies from good to bad as with all families. Good in terms of we have to work together to enable the service delivery concept to happen in practice. We are the executive leg of service delivery, we who do the work and we who are on the ground are dependent upon Head Office to a large extent, especially with regards to our budget, personnel and some other things like learning support material as well as the placement of learners in special schools. Their function is policy development, funding, evaluation and training. But overall, there is collaboration between us. The bad side of our relationship, as can be found in all good families, is that we are dependent upon them for approval of decisions and certain services, and at times we may have delays that can create tension in our relationship.”

Question 3: Are District Offices adequately resourced to deal with the challenges of schools and to enable schools to provide quality education?

“We will never have enough resources. Schools always want more resources, more money, for safety, more materials. Some schools are not up to standard and are relatively old, so they need maintenance and improvements. With more than 14 000 schools in the Western Cape, there will always be a need for more human resources, finances, more building and better facilities. As far as the quality of education is concerned, we have to make do with what we have.”

Question 4: What are the prevailing gaps and ambiguity within EMDCs?

“If our service provision statement is completely filled, then we should have enough resources to provide the necessary service. Money is a relative commodity and one can always do with more. However, to answer your question of whether it is harming our service provision, the answer is no. I don’t think so.”

Question 5: What relevant evidence is there to suggest that EMDCs are providing better and sufficient service delivery?

“The idea behind the establishment of EMDCs was to provide more effective service delivery and to bring Head Office closer to schools. We are now closer to schools. I think that we have achieved that in the sense that we now have a full sector serving the schools housed in one complex. Previously offices of circuit managers, curriculum advisers were located at regional offices and they had to report on a monthly or weekly basis to the WCED head office. Other departments like social service and psychology operated from different locations.”

Question 6: Do you think that enough time is allocated for teacher’s in-service training?

“Yes more than enough. Teachers are always complaining, but if you ask them what they do on their own, you will realise that they do nothing. You have to understand that educators are already professionally qualified. So, why should there be a continual training for those who are already qualified. Now they may argue that the curriculum has changed. The curriculum has changed years ago. All educators should make it their responsibility to be informed of changes and not wait on the department to over-train him for a further three years to continue doing his work. What is happening in the interim? What are they doing now in their classes? Does it mean that because they are not adequately trained they cannot teach? Teachers are using in-service training as a “smoke screen”. They expect the department to give them training, but what are they doing?”

4.6.2.2 EMDC Director 2

Question 1: Do you think that circuit teams are adequately equipped and trained to deal with the challenges and needs of schools?

“We now have new circuit teams. The structure of circuit teams has changed somewhat. After 1 July 2008 we appointed a circuit team manager who is responsible for a Multifunctional Team. In other word within that team there are different departments, namely that of administration, learning support service, curriculum services and management services. This is a new post that was created from 1 July 2008. Before appointing them in their positions, we gave them a whole week of training and will continue to do so as time progress. I think circuit teams are adequately trained, although there is a nuance difference, because they now have a more managerial role. They manage a variety of functions, whereas previously they managed a specialised function.”

“It depends on whether your emphasis on training is in an excess way or training in an additional way. They are people who were experienced in their field and senior individual in the education system. They are now more senior in the KS system. They will get the necessary training, but I am sure they know what they are doing.

With regards to the workload, the number of schools per circuit should be around thirty. In some circuits it may be more, while in others it may be less. The difference is that there are two IMG advisers within a circuit. So, the moment you talk about management and governance, you would divide the 30 to 39 schools between the two IMGs. That would mean that there are 19 to 20 schools per MFT with the IMG as its head.”

Question 2: Do you think that EMDCs have the capacity to develop schools into learning organisations?

“Yes, but the question is how long will it take us to do so. The idea of the establishment of EMDCs was to bring service closer to the service point. It was the intention to bring the service of the WCED Head Office closer to the client, which is

the school and all those associated with schools, so that schools could identify with the department. In that regard we have made a huge success from 2001 to 2008. The WCED is no longer a distant entity that is available on the other side of a telephone line or that you see on the cover of an envelope.

EMDCs are committed to assist schools to improve their output. With output I mean better school organisation in terms of what happens within schools, in other words the learning process within schools, the delivery of curriculum, better learning results and ultimately the production of a better equipped learner at the end of the learning process. For this to happen, schools have to undertake regular introspection to see what they still have to do to improve their output. This is and will continue to be our objective to assist schools to achieve better output. For this reason the department [here this refers to WCED Head Office] established teacher support and development centres.

Also, the whole school development department aims to assist schools to improve their output by offering schools nine different fields on which they can base their development. We evaluate schools annually and try to show them what the objective was that they set up for themselves and to what extent they achieved their objectives to develop professionally.”

Question 3: Do you think that the service delivery charter contains realistic objectives, considering the budgetary constraints the WCED is experiencing?

“Yes it is realistic. You should not link monetary constraints to the charter. The charter is a document to define your aim and objectives. The way you achieve objectives is not always linked to finances. It is also connected with what goes on in your heart and mind. The problem with the education system is that we always link service delivery and development with finances. Development is largely linked with what goes on in the hearts and minds of those who manage schools. If you visit schools, you notice that development collapses because educators in the class are causing development to collapse. It is because of those teachers who get into their cars

at 2 pm, not caring whether learners are on street from 2 pm to 6 pm or at what shebeen these learners end up in. This is where education collapses.”

Question 4: Is the service delivery charter realistic in its objectives, taking into consideration the budgetary constraints experienced by the WCED?

“People so often equate finance with success. There can be a link and it can contribute to success and better service delivery. However, money is not the alpha and the omega of better service delivery. I visited India where I was shown some of their best schools. Those schools looked far worse off than our schools in the townships. Our schools in the townships have state of the art computer centres, whereas those Indian schools are equipped with 1940, 1960 technology with electric wires hanging down from the roof. However, their output is so much better than ours without the resources and technology that some people claim is necessary for good education. You can teach and successfully complete the curriculum without the resources people claim are essential for quality education. We accommodate all children that enrol at our schools from the age 7 to 15. Unfortunately we do not have mechanisms in place to go to the streets to look for children of school-going age and enrol them in the system, but we accommodate all who register with us. We can only accommodate those who register themselves for accommodation.”

4.6.2.3 Interpretation of data

District Office Directors generally perceive a good collaborative relationship between District Offices and Head Office. The only frustration EMDC directors are experiencing is the delays they sometimes experience in the acquisition of urgent and important services. With regards to the quantity of resources, the feeling is that they can make do with the resources available without compromising the standard of quality education. They believe that the WCED has made significant progress with regards to effective and efficient service delivery by coming closer to schools.

During the interview one director was extremely negative and almost hostile towards teachers’ general attitude towards their work and teachers collaboration with the department. The director felt that teachers are sufficiently qualified to deal with the

new changes that came into the education system and it is up to teachers to remain informed of any new development. This individual felt that the in-service training the WCED provides for teachers is enough to enable them to produce quality education. They also feel that MFTs, and circuit team leaders are highly qualified individuals who have been in the system for a long time. As such they should be capable of providing effective and efficient services to schools. They will receive additional training as their job description changes.

Furthermore, they feel that EMDCs have the capacity to develop schools into learning organisations, but this may take some time. They feel that educators and schools should take the initiative in this regard and should not wait on District Offices or Head Office to take the lead. They also feel that the lack of resources is not a major problem and that development and quality education can be achieved through motivated and dedicated educators. They believe that schools and educators are the greatest hindrance in the process of development.

4.6.2.4 Conclusion

Conducting interviews with the directors of district offices gave me a sense of the amount of tension that may exist between schools and District Offices. This hostility could stem from the fact that EMDCs are daily in contact with schools and is the first point of contact if issues should arise. Even though it is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it would be interesting to understand how schools view and respond to the new District Office structures and their leadership. The data suggest that significant power is exercised daily through the interaction between school and District Office.

The report given by one director that the curriculum changed many years ago is in conflict with research done by Lewin (2002:343) that indicates that “South Africa may now have too much rather than too little policy, opening up the possibilities of information overload, lack of confidence in consistency of purpose and modes of provision, and fragile follow-through in implementation.” Reflecting on these interviews, I deduce that the Habermasian notion of communicative processes is far

from ideal because consensus, reflexive discussion is often not present. This could stifle the WCEDs objective to assist schools becoming learning organisations.

4.6.3 CIRCUIT TEAMS

For the following interview, I remained on the same tier, which is the District office level or EMDC. Circuit team members were interviewed at two different EMDCs. The following were the respondents that I interviewed at two different EMDCs: one circuit team manager (Circuit Team Member 1), one IMG Adviser (Circuit Team Member 2), one GET curriculum adviser (Circuit Team Member 3) and a FET curriculum adviser (Circuit Team Member 4). Four respondents were selected randomly. The following questions are different, depending on the position they hold in their respective multifunctional teams and the curriculum department they represent.

4.6.3.1 Circuit Team Member 1

Question 1: How many members comprise a circuit team comprise and what are their portfolios?

“Our membership varies depending on the intervention we provide to schools. Generally all circuit teams comprise a circuit team manager, two or more curriculum advisers, psychologist, learner support educator, nutrition specialist, social workers and an Institutional Management and Governance (IMG) member. All these members make up a multifunctional team. Multifunctional teams are very liquid and change all the time. The need of the school determines the size and type of intervention. Based on the needs of schools, multifunctional teams are grouped together out of circuit teams to attend to a specific need of a school. So there is no set number of multifunctional teams at EMDCs. However, the circuit team is a fixed legal entity that was commissioned by national government.”

“We as FET and GET curriculum advisers fulfil a different role in a circuit team. We fulfil the role of curriculum support people within circuit teams. Outside of the circuit team we are the specialists and inside the circuit team we are the generalists.”

Question 2: *Do you think enough time is being spent on teacher development to deal with curriculum changes?*

“Since 2004/5 the curriculum has been changing consistently and is still changing all the time. There are such a lot of changes that I feel educators cannot cope and neither can we. I think teachers need more training, but given their workload I think the only available time is on weekend and holidays.”

Question 3: *What are the prevailing gaps and ambiguity within circuit teams?*

“To bring you down to what we are doing, we have since also decided that we want to get and work around six circuits per circuit team. Within each circuit a multifunctional team selects a school for a term to do more intensive work. So if a school is identified, the school does a self-evaluation that it submits to the circuit teams. We study the self-evaluation report and then go in as a team for four weeks. During the third week we go to schools for 4 days from 8 am until 2:30 pm. We then do a thorough evaluation of all the different sections in the school. We look at the classroom, we look at lessons presented, we look at the attendance of educators and learners, what types of structures exist in the school. What resources are available, how long they are available to educators. We look at the classroom setups and the administration.”

“What we found in the team is that we sometimes don’t have all of the necessary people required to group together a multifunctional team to address all the needs at school. In my component (circuit team) I don’t have one single curriculum adviser who works in a primary school other than my arts and culture people.”

Question 4: *Do circuit teams have enough capacity to effectively serve schools? If not, what are those constraints?*

“At our EMDCs we have only two curriculum advisers who work in the Intermediate Phase and primary school phase in Grades 4-7. They are Mr. D and Mr F. What is happening now is that, because we are working with a primary school and the

majority of our team members work at high school level, I requested that Mr. F come to work in our team for a week. He then also becomes part of all our visits to the school. After our three-week visit, we then visit the school every alternate Wednesday. That whole Wednesday is then devoted to that school. We go back to that school and now we start and put the support in place.”

“At the end of our first week, we do a follow-up visit and give the school a full report on all the five focus areas of the whole school evaluation. We use those focus areas that’s within the whole school evaluation policy and give them a report back based on them. So they get a report on the functionality of their school, learner achievement, on management and governance over learners, parent’s community, the school governing body’s involvement, their role and function.

We cannot address all of the needs of schools because we mostly do crisis management. We also don’t have any secretaries and have to do all our administrative work ourselves. The major constraints therefore are that each CMT does not comprise of the ideal services and resources required by MFT. So where you could have completed a project in one week, you still need to leave certain aspects over for the next week because x, y and z was not part of the process and you need those individuals to be part of the evaluation.”

4.6.3.2 Circuit Team member 2

Question 1: Do you think enough time is being spent on teacher development to deal with curriculum changes?

“As the service providers, we definitely have to take responsibility for the lack of proper training. We have to make a clear distinction between training and orientation. The employer is not a training organisation. It is the responsibilities of the higher educational institutions (HEI) to train teachers. What we can do is to merely orientate teachers. What we have been doing, particularly with the national curriculum statement, we have been orientating teachers over three- to five-day workshops. I don’t know how much pedagogical value there is in orientating teachers for a few

days' months before implementation. I think our model of the transformation process in this country is flawed.”

Question 2: What shortcoming and successes within the circuit teams do you experience in terms of delivering services to schools?

“What we found as a great lack is that our team as such is lacking in being able to fulfil all of the needs of the particular school and that is also the case with other teams. Also as a result, when we work with a school, we then have to identify specific needs and then we have to make arrangements with other curriculum advisers to come in and discuss with them what the needs are, take them through the report and then ask for their involvement and have appointments made with them to visit the school so that they are clued up and assist from there. This is how our circuit teams work at the moment.

The major success within MFTs is that when you have a particular problem, you can view it from different angles. You not only approach it from a management point of view, but I have psychologists that can argue it from another angle. That eliminates a skew version from seeing something from one way. You can see things from different angles and that is invaluable to us. There are certain things that we have to do independently, but on our year planner we have identified days where we meet as a CMT. Those days and plans are set on our year planner. There are times when our plan intermarries, especially where we have to function as a team.”

Question 3: Do circuit teams have enough capacity to effectively serve schools? If not, what are those constraints?

“We don't have the required discipline skills available because of the number of problems based at EMDCs. For instance, in my Circuit Management Team, which comprise of multifunctional expertise, I have only two psychologists, one learning support educator, a curriculum adviser for Mathematics, a curriculum adviser for English, a curriculum adviser for agriculture, one for engineering and technology, which is mechanical engineering, and one for social science. The others are curriculum advisers for high schools and FET institutions. So, it is difficult for them

(MFTs). Yes, they do what they are able to do, but they need more primary school curriculum advisers.”

Question 4: *What are the prevailing gaps and ambiguity within circuit teams?*

“We still work under the former Circuit Manager’s job discretion. We still don’t have a job description, if I may tell you that. (Laughing) I was permanently appointed in 2002, and ever since I have been here we had so many meetings, trying to address our job description. Let’s hope next year they will have something on the table for us. Our work entails institutional management and governing. We are supposed to see to all management issues at schools, training of school management teams and also the school governance aspect. But if you deal with 39 schools per circuit, there is no way you are going to get to each school. The last time our job description was presented to us, it was proposed to each have a maximum of 18 schools in order for us to be able to do justice to what is required of us. So you have more crisis management than actual management.

There is a discrepancy in terms of time management. What normally happens is that sometimes provincial offices here in Cape Town, or I should say from national down to provincial, make certain demands. For instance, let say demands are made on the curriculum as has been the case now, because this year a new FET curriculum started. There are quite a number of meetings and training, and curriculum advisers are obliged to attend, so that disrupts any organisation we put in place for the year.

As a result you will find when we plan a CMT project; you will find a depleted MFT because of demands placed by national or provincial long after our plans have been put in place. This often happens and we have to either postpone or cancel our appointments. We also have resistance from the school side in the sense that we initially set up all plans and negotiations have been put in place with that particular school and you find you are not able to start the project because the majority of your team members are not available, or you find that you would not be able to address all of the needs you initially set out to address. It is not because they do not avail themselves, but because they have pressure placed on them also.”

4.6.3.3 Circuit Team Member 3

Question 1: Do you think enough time is being spent on teacher development to deal with curriculum changes?

“In my seven years as curriculum adviser it is my opinion that we have not equipped educators with enough resources and skills for successful implementation of new changes. Let me hasten to add that a creative teacher will make do with the limited resources he/she has. When teachers tell me about their lack of resources, I always ask them, what they have and they do with what they have.”

Question 2: Do circuit teams have enough capacity to effectively serve schools? If not, what are those constraints?

“We sometimes have to make do with what we have. We always have a shortage of manpower but we try to do our work to the best of our ability and sometimes under difficult circumstance. For instance in my Circuit Management Team, which comprise of multi functional expertise, I have only two psychologist, one learning support educator, a curriculum adviser for mathematics, a curriculum adviser for English, a curriculum adviser for agriculture, one for engineering and technology which is mechanical engineering and one for Social Science. The others are curriculum advisers for high schools and FET institutions. So, it is difficult for them (MFTs). Yes, they do what they are able to do, but we need more primary school curriculum advisers.”

Question 3: What shortcomings and successes within the circuit teams do you experience in terms of delivering services to schools?

“We have shortage of staff and we are overworked. The successes are that we can help our colleagues in school who have even bigger challenges than ours and we are able to share information. We also learn from each other because we have different skills in our team. This enables us to see matters from different perspectives. When we do our reporting, we have no assistance. We need secretaries.”

Question 4: Do circuit teams have enough resources and capacity to fulfil the needs of schools?

“There are 39 schools assigned to one CMT and we have six CMTs at our EMDC. These schools do not include private and pre-primary schools. It only includes public primary and secondary schools. Because of the shortage of person power, we decided at our broad management meeting to take at least one school per term per circuit where we will do more intense work. During that time everybody knows they are not allowed to make any other work plans, because they have to work only with those six schools that have been identified. We go to these schools for a whole week.

Four days we go there for a full day and on that Friday we as a team get together at the EMDC to draw up our reports. The following week we give them a verbal and written report. We then engage in a discussion with teachers and give them a chance to respond to what we say, because what we say and experience in the classroom must correspond. Thereafter we visit the school every alternate week. The official visiting day is on a Wednesday.

Over and above that, when teachers are not using the reading period as it is intended, and if is not on the timetable, we go to schools and stress the importance of it. From this aspect we make use of our stress component, which is our psychological component (which includes a school psychologist, HIV/AIDS coordinators and learning support officers). We would then ask the school psychologist and the learning support officers to intervene and take the staff through a training process with regards to the reading programme.

There is also behaviour management. We found that discipline is a problem at school. For this purpose we need to take the staff through a behaviour management programme. We also have a bigger programme on extensive behaviour management that continues over 12 months. Here we identify only twelve schools per year (two per circuit) because of the limited funding available. This project includes sessions with learners, educators, parents and community and it spans over a period of six months. It also focus on what policies are in place in a particular school, if /how it is working, why it is not working, whether teachers are buying into decisions made, and whether there are consistencies. The support system usually follows afterwards.

We have only one social worker at our EMDC. CMTs consist of multifunctional members, but in order for me to provide all the service required by a particular school, we have to draw in the social worker at another point. We make them aware what is happening in the school and the social worker then liaises with the school and set up dates for their intervention.”

Question 5: Do you think curriculum advisers are adequately trained to assist educators to deal with curriculum developments?

“Often we do not speak in one voice. We are all different individuals, with different personalities and management styles. I think we as curriculum advisers don’t get together enough. I, for example, have to serve about 200 schools. We are overburdened and have a mammoth task that we have to fulfil. There is not enough time or hours in a day for us to get together and talk about these things. Our workload is too packed. However, I still think that we do possess a sufficient amount of policy knowledge. However, I also need to be honest and add that we could be lacking the theoretical framework and nuances underpinning the issues we engage with in curriculum matters.”

4.6.3.4 Circuit Team member 4

Question 1: What are the general responses you get from schools when providing service to them?

“Some schools are very good collaborators, especially those in need. However, we found that many schools are not comfortable with working to close with us. There is a sense that we are evaluating and spying on them.”

Question 2: Can you think of any reason for such responses?

“I think I have to ascribe that to the fact that teachers are totally overburdened when it come to administration. I have to admit that we are expecting a huge amount of work from teachers with regards to administration apart from teaching and other extra-mural activities. We have to understand that teachers present up to nine to ten lessons

to different groups of children on a daily basis. I don't think we are realistic in terms of our expectations to teachers and I really think that they have to perform wonders in their classroom. Unfortunately, many of us continue to remain critical towards the role of teachers and insensitive to the load teachers have."

Question 3: What are the prevailing challenges you experience within circuit teams?

"As a GET curriculum adviser I have to tell you there are a number of issues. To start with, we have a huge problem with physical resources. We have a problem with regards to availability of vehicles for work purposes that should be made available to go to schools. Secondly, we have a shortage of human resources. We need more support staff to make a difference in schools. Thirdly, we have a problem with site base support. There are some issues between the National Department of Education and the teachers Unions with regards to appraisal of teachers and classroom visitation. This problem has been ongoing for a few years now. The WCED and Unions will have to get together to thrash out the issue of classroom visitation.

We cannot visit classrooms because an agreement still has to be reach between the state and teachers unions with regards to classroom evaluations. How are we going to measure quality teaching and learning if we are denied access to the classroom? If we don't get into the classroom soon enough, I'm afraid that we are going to be losing a lot more than what we have already lost.

Another problem is that educators are not carefully reading the resource materials that are given to them. That becomes a huge challenge. You design these wonderful resources to assist teachers in class and you take them through a workshop, going through the materials. Eventually you find teachers just filing the material and phoning back for instructions, while every step is clearly spelled out for them. We continuously provide for educators, but they are not making use of the resources provide."

4.6.3.5 Interpretation of data

The circuit teams and multifunctional teams operate in a highly collaborative environment because of their close consultative approach with school management teams, school governing bodies and the school staff. Their intervention is also done from a multifunctional perspective because of the different fields of expertise they comprise of. In a previous interview conducted with one of the directors at Head Office, I was led to believe that the WCED's commitment to quality education is severely compromised by parents and care givers. However, after concluding my interview with circuit team members I began to realise that the circuit team members' commitment to quality service is severely compromised by a lack of physical, financial and human resources, their heavy workload and unscheduled meetings arranged by the national department of education as well as WCED Head Office rather than meeting with parents and care givers.

This lack of resources reflects negatively on the WCED micro-organisational objective to develop strong circuit teams as indicated Chapter 3. Furthermore, it also impedes quality education. I make this assumption on the basis of the following observations:

- Unscheduled meetings arranged by Head Office or the national department of education, which results in the postponement or cancellation of school appointments;
- The inadequate availability of WCED resources, which leads to in heavy workloads;
- Circuit teams were promised a reduction ratio of 18 schools per multifunctional team. They are still currently serving 39 schools per circuit team;
- Circuit teams operate mostly under pressure.

Based on the way that circuit teams operate in a typical intervention as highlighted in the interviews, I concluded that the service rendered by circuit teams is mostly crisis intervention. The challenge is that only four schools can be serviced per year, depending on interventions for that particular year. Also, the very sad reality that I

observed is that there is only one social worker to serve 39 schools. As a former teacher, I have experienced that almost all formerly disadvantaged schools have severe social challenges. As the interviews progressed I came to understand that circuit teams, just like teachers, are now experiencing low morale.

To the question posed in chapter two of whether Circuit Teams within the EMDCs are indeed providing the increased coordinated and holistic support service to schools, it now become clearer. The above-mentioned observation indicates that fundamental challenges exist within the service provision model that hinders Circuit Teams from providing such a service. One interviewee stated that he/she “don’t have one single curriculum advisor who works in a primary school.” While another says that “we don’t have the required discipline skills available because of a number of problems based at EMDCs.” The interviewee then went on to stipulate the shortage of human resources. These shortages points to a challenge in the service provision model which are support to assist schools in becoming learning organisations.

Also the lack of proper training for educators were highlighted which also shows inconsistency to hold educators accountable for providing quality teaching. Training and development for educators is currently the prerogative of EMDCs and Head Office. They determine the need and time allocated for training and development. A communicate deliberative idea of democracy would have offered a consultative approach which would attempt to established who is authorized to take a collective decision and which procedures are to be applied. It appears that the WCED is still failing to understand the context of schools and are “not being sensitive and sympathetic to the realities and inherited limitations that make education more difficult than we might wish. (Bloch 2009:26).

Based on the data presented to me by circuit teams, I conclude that real power is still vested in the WCED Head Office. Power on a circuit team level seems fairly positive in the sense that views and opinions are shared among circuit teams and educators. Communication features high on the circuit team agenda because of the direct contact with schools and procedures involved in selecting an appropriate intervention from circuit teams. Generally I conclude that, as far as the circuit teams are concerned, the

service delivery model can contribute significantly towards schools becoming learning organisations.

In the final analysis I conclude that circuit teams are the most significant and consistent contact the WCED has with learning institutions. As such it is mostly up to circuit teams to ensure that policies are implemented at schools level and that good practice is maintained at Front Office level. It is therefore consistent to argue that Circuit Teams are the main evaluators and monitors in the education sector and are best able to assess the advances of the microstructure of the WCED. However, looking at their schedule and their workload, I conclude that circuit teams (as one of the main state operators) do not provide adequate monitoring and evaluation.

4.6.3.6 Conclusion

Multifunctional teams are fairly fluid and change continually based on the needs of schools. This is precisely what schools are, flexible and dynamic. This makes multifunctional teams fairly flexible to address specific needs of local schools as they arise. The restructuring process is still in a developmental stage and will continue to impact on EMDCs and circuit teams as it continues to unfold. If circuit teams do what is intended from their inception, it will make a significant contribution towards developing schools into learning organisations. The data suggest that many circuit team members do not feel secure in their jobs and hence have a sense of insecurity about their position. This can greatly disrupt their striving to meet the WCEDs objectives to assist schools becoming learning organisations. Such distortion can manifest itself in window dressing in service delivery. Also, it became clear that a lack of resources to a large extent reduces the quality of service. This in turn is a reflection on the WCED Head Office ability to provide resources for effective service provision.

4.6.4 School Principals

The following interviews were all done on the third tier of the WCED. Four school principals from formerly disadvantaged schools were interviewed. These schools are located in both coloured and black townships. The following respondents were selected in one primary school and two secondary schools.

Question 1: *Do schools experience better support provision than before?*

School Principal 1

“Yes. We are receiving support from our district office, particularly academic support, because they are mentoring our teachers to improve their results. Time and again we are in touch with the curriculum adviser who comes and assists our teachers. This resulted in an improvement in the quality of our teaching and learning. So we are getting maximum support I can say from the district.”

School Principal 2

“As a primary school principal I think EMDCs and circuit teams are not providing us with quality support. We received only one visit from our circuit team manager and that was to introduce him. He was never seen again. I requested another visit but received no visit as yet. I think only Learner Attainment Schools are getting quality services from EMDCs.”

School Principal 3

“I am certainly not happy with the service of circuit teams. I requested help from circuit teams for my school and was victimised and considered an ineffective leader. Because of my request for assistance I had to attend workshops that are especially arranged for leaders with these particular problems. So, I felt victimised and as a result I don't share my problems with circuit teams anymore.”

School Principal 4

“I am happy with the services I get. When I was at a school in an urban area, the service was very bad. However, our new circuit team leader even gave us his cell number to call any time except for weekends.”

Question 2: *If not, what is your expectation of improved service delivery?*

School Principal 2

“I wish that EMDCs would become more supportive and circuit teams become more visible and available for assistance.”

School Principal 3

“I expect EMDCs and circuit teams to be more cooperative and sensitive to the needs of schools. When we alert them of the problems we have, it does not always indicate a weak leadership or management style. Most of the time we lack information, professional skills or resources and this is why we appeal for their assistance.”

Question 3: *What challenges do schools experience with regards to lines of communication to Head Office, EMDCs or circuit teams?*

School Principal 1

“We are communicating very well with Head Office. HO is very effective in dealing with employment issues and payment of teachers. If you deal directly with HO it is effective, but if you work through the EMDC it takes time.”

School Principal 2

“The lines of communication between our school and circuit teams are very bad. They are most of the time not contactable. I feel if they have a heavy workload, they should prioritise their schedule and exercise time management.”

School Principal 3

“The communication between circuit teams and my school is not good, so we communicate with EMDCs on a need-to-know basis.”

School Principal 4

“We have constant communication with our circuit team. We are part of the Cape Winelands EMDC but we have a satellite office in Stellenbosch, with an IMG leader with his team always available.”

Question 4: *What are the positive and negative effects of EMDCs and circuit teams on local schools?*

School Principal 1

“I can’t say much about negative effects because my school is a different school. Firstly, we are in a disadvantaged community and the EMDC is focusing a lot on my school. Hence I would not have any negative feedback because I am getting maximum support as I said before.”

School Principal 2

“It appears to me that only when circuit team members have to prove themselves for appointment on a permanent basis they communicate with schools regularly. To me it seems that schools are not important, but they are more eager to secure their positions.”

School Principal 3

“They are closer to school and we can reach them in a shorter space of time. I can only speak for my school. The support is not what I hope for.”

Question 5: How often do MFTs visit your school to render support?

School Principal 1

“Every fortnight (every second week) the Link Team, who have their routine, visit my school on a Wednesday, when they (circuit managers, psychologist, curriculum advisers) would meet with the Educator Support Team (EST) to listen to any challenges they experienced for the two weeks. On their visit they would meet the School Management Team (SMT), and the Educator Support Team (EST). The SMT includes head of department (HOD), deputy principal and the principal. EST comprises class teachers who assist in identifying the needs of student. These teams would highlight the barriers they experience in school with regards to learners. The EMT will then give their intervention to that particular problem. In this meeting the EST is mentored on a how to support the learners who is identified with problems.

These learners will then be referred to various institutions like school clinics where they can be helped. Like if a learner is identified as being unable to read and write, that learner is referred to the school clinic where the psychologist identifies the main problem. If I can cite one example: we have two learners who are even unable to read (one being 18 and the other 21). The department had a meeting with their parents and told them that their children were over-age and should be referred to a skill centre where they can choose careers like bricklaying, plastering, etc.”

School Principal 2

“MFT never visited my school for advice or support in spite of attempts to invite them to give assistance our school with challenges that we encountered.”

School Principal 3

“They visited our school before, but that was a long time ago.”

School Principal 4

“We have meetings with our circuit teams every second month. At this meeting we share ideas and discuss what IQMS works well and how we can implement it in our schools. We also discuss the nine focus area of schooling.”

Question 6: *Do MFTs spend adequate time in assisting ESTs and EMTs with their challenges?*

School Principal 1

“MFTs come to my school every second Wednesday, not for the whole day but for one or one and a half hours only. We identify only one issue at a time and then we discuss how we can overcome it. MFTs usually schedule their time. I think this amount of time is not sufficient, but the workload they have allows them to spend only one hour per school because, as I said, they have nine schools in this circuit. They are trying to slot in all of those schools in their programme.”

School Principal 4

“Principals in my district meet with circuit managers at least three times a year to discuss issues like assessment, leadership, management, finances etc. there are thirty schools represented at this meeting.”

Question 7: *Do think that MFTs are adequately equipped to deal with all problems encountered by schools?*

School Principal 1

“Not at all. Particularly with the challenges of national curriculum statements (NCS). We complain many times to the WCED that the SMTs should be equipped. I think that the amount time allocated for workshops annually is totally inadequate. We have been pleading with the department to workshop teachers thoroughly so that they are equipped to deal with the changes that take place. The WCED tried to change the two-hour workshop per year by commissioning teachers to attend workshop during

vacation times. Teachers were complaining that they have to sacrifice their holidays and that the department should look into other ways to solve this problem.”

School Principal 4

“I think MFT members in our district are well equipped. If legal or other issues are discussed, they always get someone with the necessary skill, even if it means using the expertise of principals. We have a farm social worker who constantly works with our school”

Question 8: *How do EMDCs respond to the crime and drug abuse challenges in schools?*

School Principal 1

“In my school this is a serious problem because my learners are robbed almost every day. In response to this, the EMDC is now using Bambanani security services in collaboration with the South African Police Services (SAPs) to provide protection to learners. Two weeks ago, Head Office beefed up security with three SAPs officers who are now stationed at school until the end of the day. Now we have four Bambanani security officers and three policemen stationed at the school because we have regular robbery at our gates.”

School Principal 2

“Our school has been vandalised several times. With the assistance of the Safer School project, we now have Bambanani security and surveillance cameras at our school. In spite of that, our school has been vandalised three times and one of our surveillance camera was stolen. We now have private individuals watching our school at nights because Bambanani security only operates in day time.”

School Principal 3

“Where school safety and crime are concerned, I have to say that EMDCs are very helpful to assist. The Safer School project is situated at Head Office. But we communicate through our EMDC for assistance. The assistance is good, but the environment is not good.”

School Principal 4

“Their intervention is fairly good. We usually phone the call centre of Safer School at Head Office after we have informed the police. Our school has a very good relationship with the local police. The police even come out to assist us with disciplinary problems.”

4.6.4.1 Interpretation of data

The data indicate that school principals’ perceptions of service provision vary significantly from satisfactory to unsatisfactory. It is clear that some schools enjoy much attention, while others get less attention. The contradictory response points to a “lack of mutual respectful processes” (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:11). There may be justifiable reasons why interventions in one school is more intense than that of others. However, if these reasons are not adequately expressed it may lead to disagreement or inadequate understanding. It is for this reason why deliberative democracy is necessary to establish who needs what and which procedures are to be applied.

Habermas (1996:305) argue that the “Processes of deliberation take place in argumentative form, that is, through the regulated exchange of information and reasons among parties who introduce and critically test proposals.” It is this kind of engagement that would allow all stakeholders accept the outcome of services or policies that they have been a part of. A deliberative process also takes place in an inclusive interaction, free from internal or external coercion. An important feature of deliberative democracy is therefore the continuing engagement of stakeholders so that mutual consensus is reached.

In many policy documents, the WCEDs current service provision model undermines the important principles of democracy. These principles as pointed out by Harbermas (1996:305) include:

- (i) The argumentative form in which deliberation takes place.
- (ii) That deliberation is inclusive and public.
- (iii) That deliberation is free from any form of coercion.
- (iv) That deliberation is based on the understanding that agreed upon decisions are not static.
- (v) It takes into account the equal interest of all relevant stakeholders.
- (vi) It takes into account the needs, wants and preferences of relevant stakeholders.

Based on the above-mentioned principles of deliberative democracy, the WCED's service provision model appears to be based on the notion of self-interest and has not yet succeeded in any significant progress to develop schools into learning organisations. The principles as stated above provide a normative theory of democracy and are "designed for purposes of justification" (Habermas 1996:290). Based on the interview data I conclude that the intensity of service provision depends on the needs of schools. It could also points to lack of resources which in turn reflect on the WCED Head Office. If more human resources are made available, more services could be provided. Moreover leadership and management on the part of schools also need to factor quality teaching and learning into the equation.

As already indicated elsewhere, schools are dynamic and should compensate for the WCED's incapacity through strong management and leadership commitment. It should be noted that it remains the WCED's responsibility to provide training and development for effective leadership and management in schools.

4.6.4.2 Conclusion

The data indicates a mixed perception of principal's experience of the WCEDs service provision to schools. To clearly understand the mixed reaction of principals requires an understanding of the historical background of the WCED system before apartheid. Also, that a number of factors works together in creating an integrated package of

challenges in our education system. The WCED is attempting to provide an unequal but equitable distribution of resources to formerly disadvantaged schools. With inadequate deliberation it may create tension, because not all former disadvantaged schools are on the same level.

Also some schools are more labour intensive than others. As such a communicative deliberative idea of democracy as a means of communication could be used as a justifiable tool to address above-mentioned issues because of the element of argumentation it provides. Furthermore, as indicated previously, schools should be the unit of change. In other words, it is up to schools to become learning organisations. Schools should have the desire and motivation to develop into learning organisations. A flawed intervention of the WCED may further stifle the development of schools into learning organisations and may even complicate matters even further.

4.6.5 Teachers

Interviews were conducted at two schools and involved teachers at different post levels. They involve one primary and one secondary school teacher, respectively. Both teachers had several years of teaching experience and were trained in teacher training colleges in the Western Cape during the apartheid dispensation. Both teachers teach at formerly disadvantaged coloured schools.

Question 1: *How does the WCED Head Office restructuring process benefit classroom teaching?*

Teacher 1

“I don’t think the Head Office restructuring process has any impact on classroom practice as such. I think it may take some time before the restructuring impact will filter through to classroom practice.”

Teacher 2

“As a teacher I do not see any positive impact the restructuring is having on my classroom practice. If it was meant to make a difference in classrooms, schools would have been involved in the restructuring.”

Question 2: *Do you feel adequate time is allocated for the development of teachers and teachers' training?*

Teacher 1

“No. I think more time should be spent on development, especially for workshops for teachers. It seems to me that departmental officials come with a pre-determined plan on what they want and how they will achieve their objective. The teacher’s opinion is not important, because they have their fixed plan on how to achieve their outcome. The developmental programme is one-sided. EMDCs usually use an afternoon time slot of two to three hours, which I feel is totally inadequate to run through certain programmes. To them, it ends there and follow-up is sometime done a few months or even a year later. Often the follow-up is because there is a change or a review in policy with regards to previous information presented.”

Teacher 2

“I feel that EMDCs determine the needs of schools and not teachers who are the practitioners. They come with their ideas and it is expected that educators should follow their plans.”

Question 3: *Do you think the teacher’s workload justifies the amount of teaching time?*

Teacher 1

“I always wanted to be a teacher because of my love and passion for teaching. However, as the educational landscape changed, I lost that love and passion because of all the administration and extra-curricular activities enforced on teachers. I don’t have adequate time to do effective teaching. As you prepare the lesson, you have keep in mind the children’s profile that are expected to be recorded and reported on daily, the physical writing out of lessons, the amount of writing children have to do, even oral pieces should be written our and grammatically checked so that it can be reflected in the children’s portfolio. These require resources like files, folders, worksheets, computers, etc.

Oral is supposed to be a verbal interaction between teachers and learners. I don't think an oral piece should be written out and grammatically checked, especially when you have more than forty written pieces that should be checked. That is an additional workload that I feel is totally unnecessary. I believe that is an indication that senior officials do not trust the integrity of educators. I have a huge problem with the amount of workload that is expected of me as a teacher."

Teacher 2

"Our workload is too heavy and can never be justified. We spend most of our time doing administrative work or serving on various committees. These committees include funding, choir, sport, etc. Most of our teaching time goes into discipline and controlling behaviour in our classes"

Question 4: *Do teachers have adequate consultation between school management teams and circuit teams?*

Teacher 1

"The School Management Team (SMT) is made up of subject heads of department with the principal and his deputy. The teaching staff recently raised its objection with regards to the decision-making process of the SMT. Important decisions are made that affect the entire staff, regardless of how teachers feel about it. There is no proper consultation process between SMT and teachers. For example, some teachers are given certain portfolios, but do not do justice to these portfolios.

Some of these teachers have a high rate of absenteeism and when challenges arise in that portfolio, educators do not know who to approach with a particular matter. Often the educators who are supposed to address challenges are the very challenge in itself. Teachers feel that some educators are not adequately equipped to function properly and a degree of nepotism exists in SMT. Our school comprises mostly of post level one teachers, but it is mostly the senior educators who make decision for the majority of post level one teachers without consultation with them. The appointments of individuals in certain portfolios follow to a large extent a similar path of the

appointment of RCL. Members are appointed on paper, but whether they are functioning remains to be seen.

A new Circuit Management Team was appointed recently in our circuit and most teachers don't know them. It is also clear to me that the circuit teams are only interested in the progress of Grade 12. They indicated that Grade 12 is the primary indicator of the success of schools. I get the impression that activities in the rest of the school are not important to them. Their primary focus is the Grade 12 results. Teachers have raised their objections with regards to this and other issues. But teachers were also told that circuit teams also have their limitations and there is not much they can do with regard to our complaints. We as educators are so despondent that we see no need in complaining anymore because it is of no avail.”

Question 5: Are you satisfied with the lines of communication between teachers and circuit teams or are there too many bureaucratic processes that influence the lines of communication?

Teacher 1

“There is no good communication between circuit teams and SMTs, maybe only with the principal. When it comes to line of communication to the teaching staff, I feel there is a void and a great need for proper consultation. At the beginning of this year we had a challenge with our subject adviser. Our subject adviser scheduled a meeting with us, but notified us only the day before the scheduled appointment. We feel that the notification period is too short, because teachers too have a programme, whether it is private and family engagements.

Teacher 2

I get the impression that what EMDC officials say or request must be rigidly followed. Whatever may be on our agenda should be placed aside to accommodate them. We feel this is not fair, because when we go to EMDCs or Head Office, they do not see you without an appointment and often you only get your appointment a week later. We feel that they should be handled in the same way they handle educators. Also the issues discussed at cluster meeting are not reflected on paper when it arrives at schools. I cannot recall any incident where the teacher, SMT and circuit team came

together to discuss or solve a particular problem. I can recall one incident where teachers requested the Circuit Manager to come to school. That meeting never materialised.

The line of communication works like this: teachers identify a problem and notify the SMT. This team in turn brings it to the attention of the circuit team, who are supposed to work out an appropriate intervention. Many times teachers are told that their problem should be addressed on national level and that a solution cannot be found immediately. In 2008 our school was identified as a “problem” school, because our matric pass rate dropped lower than the required rate. Our pass rate percentage dropped from 80% to less than 60% and as such our school was identified as a problem school. A team was sent to our school to assist in solving the weak matric pass rate.

Teachers were given a chance to respond on why they think the pass rate declined. The team eventually came to the conclusion that teachers were responsible for the weak matric pass rate. Teachers felt highly insulted and offended. They felt that the WCED cannot rate the success of a school only in terms of the high matric percentage rates. The school does not exist of matriculants only. Then they also need to understand that teachers are individuals with different levels of commitments. Different aspects should be factored into the high or low matric pass rates.

The team also felt that they want to do unscheduled class visitation. I had no problem with that. I wanted them to see what type of learners we had to put up with. I also told them if they are coming unscheduled, it should be over a period of time and not just one day. Also they should monitor the school for the entire day and not just one or two hours. Learners know distinctly those white WCED vehicles and then give their best behaviour. Therefore we requested them not to use the WCED vehicles and should be dressed semi-formally. We told them to come earlier than the learners and leave after the learners are dismissed. They will then see how some of these learners come to school drugged, drunk and sometimes with bad attitudes and we have to struggle teaching those learners under such circumstances.”

4.6.5.1 Interpretation of data

Teachers generally felt that the current restructuring programme does not impact on classrooms. Some felt that it may later filter through to classroom level. Teachers feel Head Office and EMDCs are still exercising too much power and there is not much trust between teachers and the departmental officials. Others feel that the relationship between schools and Head Office has improved significantly. Most teachers also felt that their workload is unjustifiable and inadequate time is allocated for teacher development. They feel that this could be the cause of their low morale and high absenteeism.

Teachers expressed their concerns that the evaluation of school quality is squarely based on the outcome of matric results. They feel the schools are made up of all grade groups as well as the amount of resources at their disposal and the service provision from the WCED. All these variables should be factored into consideration before judgment can be made with regards to quality. What also became clear in the interview were the disparities between policy and practice. Policy expects educators to be well trained and highly professional. In these interviews I found that educators are unprofessional and not highly skilled. Whether they have been reduced to this status through this different educational landscape is a subject for another study.

4.6.5.2 Conclusion

The data indicate that teachers are not satisfied with EMDCs or the WCED's service provision model. They still feel left out in important matters that pertain to their job description. This includes consulting them as practitioners when it comes to the type of training, the amount of training and the amount of time allocated for training. Major decisions are still vested in Head Office and EMDCs with regards to teacher's development and services. As a result there is still a large amount of suspicion between teachers and the WCED officials. This perceived lack of trust and support could hinder educator's technical, professional and interpersonal growth and their willingness to assist schools in becoming learning organisations.

This dissatisfaction indicates that educators want to be involved in matters that directly affect them and their students and could also serve as an argument for a communicative deliberative process to service delivery. This would eliminate pathological decision-making and make room for better deliberation.

4.7 ANALYSIS OF CODIFIED GRID DATA

The following grid indicates the interviewees' conceptual links with the five constitutive meanings, as well as the interviewees' experiences of the WCEDs service provision model. The codified data in the grid below were used to reconcile interview data with the constitutive meanings of a learning organisation. After codifying the data, it was easy to write up the report on the data presented. Conducting these interviews gave me an understanding of the thoughts, emotions and sentiments that are part and parcel of the education processes and play a phenomenal role in how policy maps onto practice. The interview data also suggest a conceptual link between policy and how stakeholders view these policies.

Themes	Interview Head Office	Interview EMDC Directors	Interview Circuit Teams	Interview School Principals	Interview Teachers
Quality Education	•	•	•	•	•
Inclusive Education	•				
Collaborative Teamwork	•	•	•	•	
Communication		•	•		
Power	•	•	•	•	•

4.8 SUMMARY

The data indicates that policy does not necessarily work out as intended. Educational institutions are dynamic within themselves and the individual school culture plays a significant role in determining the success of the implementation of policy. The gap between policy and implementation is not always as obvious as suggested. There are many variables that contribute to the success or failure of policy implementation. These factors include resources, leadership, management, school context, service provision and readiness of school for change.

The lack of resources is often responsible for the implementation dip of policies. One cannot rule out the possibility that many policies are directly linked to the availability of physical resources. However, it must be noted that sometimes the school culture is not conducive to policy implementation or teachers may simply resist the policy. This resistance may derive from many possibilities. Some of these possibilities may include – but are not restricted to – lack of resources, poor infrastructure, lack of proper consultation, relevance to school context and resistance because of increased workload.

There is also ambivalence toward circuit teams and EMDCs, with some teachers and principals feeling that circuit teams are not doing a good job and that EMDCs are not being sensitive to the challenges that exist in schools, while EMDCs feel that teachers are lazy and not giving their full cooperation. These impasses between different sectors in the WCED could be overcome if policy makers, practitioners and service providers understand the importance of collaboration and effective and continual communication within and between sectors. This can once again be used as an argument in favour of a communicative deliberative idea of democracy. If a good understanding is fostered through effective communication of all stakeholders, the shortcoming of resources can be handled more intelligently.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to provide an overview on how the WCED's aims to develop schools into learning organisations through its service delivery model, role players' commitment to educational development, and service provision policies relate to the constitute meanings as constructed in this inquiry through critical hermeneutics (which entails a combination of hermeneutics as interpretation of meaning and critical theory, with its emancipatory interest). I emphasise the conceptual gaps and ambiguities between the three tiers of the WCED and make some recommendations to bridge those gaps. This chapter summarises the role of how the WCED, EMDCs, and circuit teams can support schools in developing into learning organisations. Furthermore how principals and educators can take ownership for developing their schools into learning organisations.

The educational landscape in South Africa, and particularly the Western Cape, is extremely complex and is constantly changing. As a result teachers are frequently subjected to educational changes and new policy initiatives. It is within this changing and contested educational context that the WCED is continuing to pursue quality education through policies and service provision that I think are not compatible with its objective to develop schools into learning organisations. In the South African democratic dispensation our education system need to rise to the occasion where practitioners and role players can get to the point where they emphasise to policy makers and Head Office officials why their service provision model is working or failing. This would provide a basis for effective development and change.

5.2 POLICY, CONSTITUTIVE MEANINGS, INTERVIEWS AND PRACTICE

I now give a conceptual exploration on the above-mentioned concepts and their relation to each other. Policies are guidelines set up by the WCED for practitioners to provide quality education to learners. These guidelines are geared towards developing schools into learning organisations. Constitutive meanings as constructed through a literature review represent the characteristics of a learning organisation. Thus I argue that policies should correspond with the constitutive meanings if they are to develop schools into learning organisations. Interviews, on the other hand, give an indication of how stakeholders perceive policy and practice. Practice should provide an indication of how policy translates into classroom practice and to what extent it benefits learners as the main service beneficiaries. Therefore policy, practice and constitutive meanings should be inseparably connected if the WCED aims to develop schools into learning organisations.

Throughout this investigation I noted that the WCED's service provision policies do not sufficiently integrate the constitutive meanings as constructed in this study. In the HCDS I noted that four policies are fairly well integrated but remain silent with regards to communication between the different levels in the Western Cape education system. This has far reaching consequences as already discussed earlier how communication impact on the notion of reflexive discussion, consent and communicative freedom, as mentioned earlier.

Furthermore, in the aspect of time policy I noted that the policy's intention was to provide learners with maximum teaching time, but the result turned out mostly negative, because the policy adversely affected teacher development, which ultimately impacts on quality teaching. Teachers have no involvement in the allocation of time with regards to workshops and training sessions. A learning organisation would have viewed this policy in the context of "technical, professional and interpersonal level" and if found short in supporting all three levels of development would have critically engaged it. On the other hand, a learning organisation should understand stewardship of time.

Furthermore, the high educator/learner ratio causes disciplinary problems that further reduce active teaching time. The power reflected in the time policy is mainly vested in the hands of directors of Head Office, with schools and teachers having very little or almost no authority over time allocation. This points once again to a significant gap between policy makers and practitioners. This policy is inconsistent with three constitutive meanings, namely power, quality education and communication.

This would in effect annul the policy, because as already indicated: constitutive meanings equal policy. However, the reality is that these policies are being dictated by Head Office and many schools adhere strictly to the WCED policies. I say many schools because there are some schools in the Western Cape who do not comply strictly with all policies handed down to them. This then leads to my conclusion that the WCED subscribes to a different set of constitutive meanings. The incompatibility between the WCED's policies and the constitutive meanings as constructed in this dissertation leads me to conclude that the WCED's understanding of a learning organisation is conceptually flawed; which in turn has significant implications.

Let me elaborate on these implication. If the WCED and District Offices have a flawed perception of a learning organisation and continue to render services to schools in the light of this flawed perception aiming to develop schools into learning organisations, it may lead to faulty services. Since the WCED's service provision model is used as a vehicle to reach its main objective, namely to develop schools into learning organisations, the service delivery model should subscribe to the constitutive meanings which underwrite a learning organisation. The conceptual tension between the WCED's service delivery model and the constitutive meanings would, in effect, make the WCED and District Offices service provision model inefficient in as far as achieving its objective is concerned.

Furthermore, policy should reflect an idea of what the WCED service provision model should be. As already stated, the WCED subscribes to a different set of constitutive meanings which, in my view, implies that the vehicle used to attain their objectives is conceptually flawed. Moreover, EMDCs were established for the purpose of providing more effective and efficient service delivery through bringing Head Office

closer to schools. If this objective cannot be attained, it means that EMDCs or District Officers are ineffective.

The fundamental purpose for constructing policies should be to provide effective and efficient service delivery to schools that would eventually produce quality education for all. If the WCED followed a process of open and quality deliberation (as equals with local schools) before the adoption of a policies or a service provision model, stakeholders will be less justified in doubting the legitimacy of a policy or service provision model. Teachers must feel that they have contributed to and influenced the outcome of a service provision model or policy, that impact on them even when they disagree with it. It is for this reason that deliberative democracy is justified because “it makes possible the public use of common practical reason” (Bohman 2000:4).

A communicative idea of deliberative democracy is a tool for justifying a particular course of action. Deliberation as used in deliberative democracy is a cooperative activity that attempts to produce a decision through argumentation for resolving challenges through a number of diverse activities. These activities include inclusive participation (as equals) of all relevant stakeholders and forcing them to justify their decisions and opinions through public debate. Deliberative democracy becomes a means of legitimation because everybody takes ownership of this dynamic process and results while at the same time leaves scope for changes over time.

Providing quality education, on the other hand, is a process that requires time and engagement with all relevant role players in the education process. This engagement should lead to a synergy between the three tiers in the Western Cape education system that can be very productive to all concerned. Therefore, developing schools into learning organisations requires a multidimensional approach. This approach should acknowledge schools as the main cluster for change. It is for this reason that we have to carefully look at all role players in the education process and explore how their contributions can assist schools in becoming learning organisations.

This study suggests that the WCED is pursuing a systemic approach to change by restructuring its Back Office. I argue that systemic change is crucial for the development of quality education and ultimately to develop schools into learning

organisations. However, I propose simultaneous transformation of Head Office, District Offices and schools in a way that may immediately impact on classroom practice, which could in turn provide learners with better skills to prepare them for higher education.

Furthermore, schools need more autonomy to develop within them and this would also enable Head Office and EMDCs to concentrate on quality service provision. I argue that it is not good practice to develop only one part of the education system in isolation from the other and it is certainly not ideal to advocate reform without a collaborative approach with all relevant stakeholders. If quality education through service provision is to be pursued, an alignment has to be forged between practitioners, policy makers, academics and service providers; that this collaborative alignment should form the basis of the WCED's attempt to develop schools into learning organisations.

Through this investigation I noted that the WCED actors, which include Head Office directors, policy makers and EMDC directors, tend to play the leading role in restructuring education in the Western Cape. They change the curriculum, construct new policies, determine time and content of training programmes, empower SGBs and educators, and play a leading role in creating greater access to education through a wide array of interventions. They then hold schools accountable for supporting and implementing new information and changes. This type of intervention appears to be a managerialist approach to service delivery.

What is flawed in this approach is that they don't send clearer and more consistent messages on how schools are to engage with these changes. This in effect makes them less involved at the micro-level of school development. For example, teachers are often confused by the interpretation of policies or the practical implementation of policies. Sometimes the unique environment of a particular school requires a different approach or intervention. It is for this reason that the WCED needs a collaborative approach to policy development so that policy becomes more relevant to the needs of all schools. Furthermore, this collaboration makes provision for more effective communication where all role players have a say in the decision-making process.

The purpose for triangulating policy documents, constitutive meanings and interviews is to locate the conceptual inadequacies in the WCED service provision, to highlight the main findings of this study, and to ascertain whether schools are receiving the necessary support that would enable them to develop into learning organisations. Triangulation refers to relating the variety of data sources like the literature, policy documents and the interview data to one another to test the validity. In this case, the purpose is to understand how all these sources can contribute towards developing schools into learning organisations.

From reviewing the literature it has already been established that it is desirable to be a learning organisation. It is good for a number of reasons. Firstly, a learning organisation remains fully functional even in turbulent times. Secondly, everybody associated with a learning organisation stands to benefit by its practice in one way or the other. Thirdly, in a learning organisation the learners are considered to be the main service beneficiaries, while the teachers, parents, school governing bodies, schools and the WCED as the service provider are also considered to be invaluable role players in the education process.

5.2.1 Policy Documents

Through critical hermeneutics I attempted to explore gaps in the service provision policies and suggest new ways of responding to this. In doing so, I have found that the service provision policies are all aimed at improving the quality of education and creating greater access to education. However, for policy to support quality education, all role players, advocates and policy makers need to have a common understanding of the direction, goals and benefits to be achieved. This is where I found a conceptual flaw in the WCED's service delivery model, because not all role players share a common understanding of the policies, and there are those who do not necessarily support these policies.

Furthermore, I argue that an important element in the process of developing learning organisations is to create a mechanism that makes it easy for schools and teachers to put policy into practice. The Western Cape education system does not always provide a conducive environment for policy implementation. Lewin *et al.* (2002:363), in

describing the changing South African education context, point out that “there were numerous and weighty policy documents that had an impact on teacher education.” This is in sharp contrast with a statement from one of the EMDC directors, who claimed that the curriculum has not changed in years. Furthermore, schools are challenged with the idea of incorporating local preferences with those policies mandated by higher-level decision makers.

In the policy on time allocation I found that the policy is not compatible with the workload of educators and the educational nuances as experienced in schools today. As a result the policy no longer meets its intended purpose. There are so many activities other than teaching happening in schools and classes that reduce actual teaching time. Some of these activities include fundraising, extramural activities, administrative duties, staff meetings and the maintenance and control of discipline. These activities are influenced by factors such as the teacher-pupil ratio, teaching at various post levels, time of week (especially Fridays) and the school’s context.

Chisholm *et al.* (2005: xiii) found that the very policy that is supposed to ensure that teaching and assessment takes place actually “undermines instructional time.” This could be because the policy is mostly concerned with intensification and accountability, and pays little or no attention to work satisfaction. It is for these reasons that I conclude that the discourse of power plays a significant role in the time policy. I argue that more a successful implementation of the policy would require a combination of pressure and support. Pressure without support could lead to alienation and rejection, while support without pressure may result in a waste of time.

5.2.2 Constitutive Meanings

Constitutive meanings provide me with the conceptual tool to link policy with practice, so much so that policy equals constitutive meanings. I argue that the WCED’s current service delivery model is not compatible with how learning organisations are developed. The basis of my assumption is framed within a hermeneutical interpretation of a learning organisation that leads to the construction of the constitutive meanings. From the literature I learned that constitutive meanings are practices, because constitutive meanings “are the basic ideas or notions in terms of

which the meanings of specific practices and schemes of activity must be analysed” (Fay 1996:115).

Furthermore, I noted from the literature that constitutive meanings “make practices what they are” (Waghid 2002:42). This suggests that a conceptual link between policy and practice had already been established, and it is necessary to explain the extent of this link. As pointed out under policy goals in Chapter Three, it is said that policy is aimed at improving the quality of education and enhancing practice. Therefore it is reasonable to argue that the WCED’s service provision model is inextricably linked to policy. Moreover, if you require an understanding of the WCED service provision model, it may be useful to understand the organisational rules that inform that model.

The WCED uses policy as a vehicle to develop the rules of educational practice. Therefore it can be argued that policy should inform practice. This then would equate constitutive meanings with the policies under discussion. The constitutive meanings can then be used to evaluate how policy should improve or enhance class room practice. In order for quality education to prevail, policies should be reflect the needs of schools especially classroom practice. It is within this conceptual paradigm that I constructed the constitutive meanings of a learning organisation Therefore, it is fair to assume that policy and practice is conceptually linked.

5.2.3 Interviews

The reason for conducting interviews was to understand the perceptions, motives and accounts of role players in education in relation to the constitutive meanings. The interview data gave me a sense how the education system in the Western Cape is being produced and perceived by the people working in it. The data constructed from the interviews alluded to the fact that all respondents acknowledge the importance of the constitutive meanings. However, not all constitutive meanings get the appropriate recognition they deserve, with respondents leaving one or more constitutive meanings unaccounted for. There also seems to be a disagreement between schools and EMDCs with regards to the quality of service provision to schools. Whether these concerns are real or perceived, I argue that the recipe for quality teaching and learning will continue to be the need for skilled practitioners and their suggestions. Therefore any

misperception whether it is based in reality or not could derail the development of schools into learning organisations.

It can be deduced from the interview data that there is a strong need for the development of a shared vision throughout the WCED and schools. The data also indicated the lack of skills with regard to subject matter amongst curriculum advisers. It is therefore clear that the WCED's service delivery model is not as integrated and holistic as intended.

5.2.4 Practice

Practice relates to how the educational processes – which include teaching and learning – are executed in schools and classrooms, and the implications of this for everyone concerned, especially the learners. Ball (1994:10) argues that “Practice is sophisticated, contingent, complex and unstable. Policies are always incomplete insofar as they relate to or map on to the ‘wild profusion’ of local practice.” In the context of a learning organisation that is context specific, it would examine policy to ascertain if it relates to its context. If policy does not address the context, a learning organisation will engage with that policy, and take corrective steps where necessary in the context of that organisation. There are a number of reasons for this, some of which include the school context; resistance in as far as policy enforces change, misunderstanding, confusion of roles and the lack of resource to implement policies. Practice should be guided by policy, but this is often not the case. I propose an alternative form of communication which is deliberative democracy, between policy-makers, academics and practitioners to enable better implementation of policies.

5.2.4.1 Managerialist practice

Throughout this study I assert that being a learning organisation is something desirable, because of its continuous development, its ability to engage proactively with change and its creativeness in adapting to turbulent times. Through the literature review I noted that a learning organisation put a high premium on learner and educator learning and as such can be classified as a worthwhile practice. It is worthwhile because educators, learners and the community benefit through their

interaction and contribution to developing schools into learning organisation. Because of the merits that learning organisations hold for the WCED, schools (which includes educators and learners) and the community, the WCED has decided to develop schools into learning organisations.

As I conducted this critical-hermeneutical inquiry into schools as learning organisations and looked at the WCEDs service provision model, I noted that the WCED's service provision model focuses heavily on prescribed teaching and learning standards and outcomes. This led me to conclude that the WCED service provision model operate within a controlled and regulated environment at the expense of internal school development. As already established earlier, a learning organisation develops mostly from within. The WCEDs service provision does not effectively provide the communicative process that would enable schools to take ownership of their own development. The service provision to schools is still very much based on management and control. Hence, I argue that the WCEDs understanding of a learning organisation is fundamentally and conceptually flawed.

This flawed understanding may have resulted partly in the WCED's adoption of a single, unitary managerialist approach to their service provision model. I call this a managerialist service provision model because of the strong emphasis on compliance rather than cooperation that should exist between schools and the WCED. Based on the constitutive meanings I constructed for a learning organisation, I conclude that a managerialist approach serves the WCEDs interest more than it serves the interest of teachers and classroom practice.

The basis of my argument is that the WCED's emphasis on efficiency is what set the stage for marketisation of schools (see Chubb & Moe 1990; Hopkin, Ainscow & West 1994; Archer 1995). I further argue that any restructuring process that does not impact positively on classroom practice defeats the purpose of restructuring.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

In this section I deal with all role players and their possible contribution to the development of schools into learning organisations. Recommendations are related as I

deal with each role player respectively. The discussion that follows reflects on the relevant role players in education and their respective contribution to the development of schools. I shall now reflect on each of the role players and their contribution to education. After almost 14 years into our democracy, schools in the WCED is still grappling with the problem of providing equal and quality education for all. This is in spite of legislation and policies such as the *South African Schools Act of 1996*, *White Paper on Education and Training (March 1995)*, and the *Education White Paper 6 (July 2001)*. Below I make specific recommendations for various sectors.

5.3.1 WCED Head Office

My approach to the WCED's service delivery model thus far has been mainly hermeneutical because of the interpretive nature of my encounter with it. I posit that as the main service provider it is the responsibility of the WCED to develop policy that enables schools to provide quality education. As such, these policies should create an enabling environment for teaching and learning. This environment is not forthcoming. As Bloch (2009:59) points out "the vast majority of schools are dysfunctional in that they are not producing the meaningful outcomes that are their primary goal." The model or vehicle used to reach this objective is likely to shift and evolve as the educational landscape continues to develop in a turbulent environment. Some of the critical issues in the WCED revolve around teachers' productivity and quality education, as well as the degree of under-performing and dysfunctional schools that still operate in the WCED.

I argue that both these issues are conceptually linked to teacher's morale. Schulze and Steyn (2007:691) draw on Saptoe's (2000:6) South African's study that "linked educator stress to, among other things, lack of discipline, unmotivated learners, redeployment and retrenchment of educators, large learner: educator ratios and new curriculum approaches." Many of these issues can be significantly reduced by the WCED as it engages in closer collaboration with all role-players. I argue that well communicated policies may provide the basis for clear planning.

If quality education is to be achieved, the WCED has to give serious consideration to these above-mentioned stress factors. I argue that there is a conceptual link between

productivity and job satisfaction. Also, the challenge the WCED faces is to create a system that will fulfil the objective of turning schools into learning organisations. This will not be achieved overnight and there is no guarantee of success. However, such a model is more likely to succeed as the continuing input of all relevant stakeholders in the education system is acknowledged and the community members become active participants in the integration of such a model as it is framed within the context of fiscal constraints.

It may also be in the best interest of all stakeholders if the WCED and EMDCs focus on the understanding of the constitutive meanings upon which each school should operate on. As previously discussed these constitutive meanings constitute what it means to be a learning organisation. What may possibly advance such a notion is if Head Office assigns to all its directorates a particular district or a cluster of schools. This would result in an even closer collaboration between Head Office and the schools as they envisaged in their service delivery model. This collaboration should be fluid as new suggestions may evolve from this type of relationship.

A key aspect of developing schools into learning organisations may begin with proper institution of lines of communication. This can best be done through deliberative democracy with its emphasis on public argumentation with equal opportunity “with the aim of arriving at an agreed judgement” (Miller, 2003:183). This would enable all stakeholders to raise their opinions and secure discussion through a systemic discursive interaction. A conceptual flaw in the WCEDs understanding of a learning organisation is the lack of effective communication in its service provision model that denies broader scrutiny and ultimately critical reflection.

Complete compatibility with the constitutive meanings with communicative democracy as the fundamental basis could significantly contribute towards teacher productivity, quality teaching which may lead to an increase of other inputs in the education system. Communicative reforms would mean head office would have to open up dialogue on multiple fronts. In the short term this may require a huge paradigm shift with regards to the way the WCED interact with schools that may have significant long-term implication. On a provincial and national level educators are so overwhelmed with administrative and teaching demands that they have little time or

inclination to engage with the broader responsibilities of social transformation and moral development, which is so necessary for learners who are confronted with so many social challenges. A consequence of the current situation is that quality teaching and learning will continue lagging behind.

The WCED has made significant progress with regards to its transformation process since the demise of the apartheid education system. Through my engagement with some of the directors at Head Office I noted that departments within the WCED head office are well coordinated. Departments within Head Office work with a synergy that appears to be very productive on Head Office level. It can therefore be said that the Head Office indeed operates like a learning organisation. However, the education landscape goes beyond Head Office and on school level the situation is totally different, with many schools operating under difficult conditions and some schools being dysfunctional. This situation is exacerbated by teachers having to bear heavy workloads, learners being undisciplined and teachers having to work with a shortage of resources. As such, schools should be given more support and mentoring, and policy should be geared towards mentoring and support to bring them to a level of becoming self-sustaining.

After analysing some of the service delivery policy documents, I began to get the impression that some policies were constructed to operate in an environment that is self-sustaining. Moreover, some policies are attempting to increase opportunities for a wider group of disadvantaged children by creating greater access to basic and specialised education. This is done by the institution of a no school fee policy and the establishment of special schools. After careful consideration of other related variables, I found that a lack of resources greatly reduces the potential of policies to provide quality education. As more learners are absorbed into the system, the more the pupil/teacher ratio increases at some schools. There appears to be inadequate monitoring of policy implementation because input and output of data do not sufficiently filter through to the WCED or schools do not reflect the correct status of their resource allocation.

Despite attempts by the WCED to equitably distribute resources, inequality remains whereby learners in higher socio-economic groups benefit disproportionately and the

budgetary constraints further exacerbate the poor standards of education. Furthermore, the restructuring programme appears to be more systemic in nature, because it focuses more on distribution of resources, infrastructure and service provision than on quality teaching and learning through classroom practice. Grimmett (1995:116) argues that “policy tends to be directed at the systemic rather than the educative aspect of schooling.” This holds true for the WCED, because many policies focus mainly on providing skills for employment and increasing educational output.

Some of the conditions that support the development of schools into learning organisations include professional development embedded in the school and classroom context, professional development focused on teachers and clearly defined learning goals, and greater access to time and resources. I argue that if the impetus for restructuring in the Western Cape had come from all role players, especially practitioners, more would have been attained. A shared vision can accomplish much more than an imposed vision. However, with the chain of events and the new political landscape unfolding in the Western Cape, the need for restructuring begins with the recognition by the WCED that the managerialist nature of the WEDC policies (especially the policy on time) needs serious reflection, because it may not be in the best interests of quality education.

Finally, the WCED should consider a middle-out or bottom-up approach to service provision, with an external quality assurance agency or the WCED management providing the framework, support and incentives, rather than directives. This type of service provision is more likely to attract participation rather than evoke alienation. It is also compatible with a more improvement-oriented approach to developing schools into learning organisations, in which case it would mean changing the rules of engaging school development. It would also encourage a more context-specific approach that is designed to acknowledge self-evaluation, that is, focus on transparency and sharing. In other words, EMDCs and Head Office are not only committed to improving service delivery, but also to providing a platform for re-thinking and re-conceptualising what they do in order to improve their service delivery model.

5.3.2 District Offices or EMDCs

District offices are more closely involved with the school and, as such, are more actively involved in the restructuring process and service provision to schools. It is therefore reasonable to assume that any flaws in the service provision model would first reflect on district offices level. One of the strengths of District Offices is that they can easily create opportunities for schools to engage with them. Schools across the Western Cape should therefore take this opportunity and make good use of them. District officers should carefully scrutinise their service delivery model and look for ways and means to make services more relevant to the needs of the school because this is their primary duty. This means looking at the roles, rules and relationships that underpin their service delivery model and their intervention with schools, even if it means making adjustments to correct policies that prevent attaining these objectives.

Good organisational planning and management will result in better school support and monitoring. In their engagement with schools, district offices should investigate and, where applicable, document all intended and unintended outcomes of important education policies and report all undesirable outcomes at their cluster meetings at Head Office for correction. Area Managers and Curriculum Advisers should pay careful attention to the context and conditions under which these policies operate.

5.3.3 Schools

There is no single pathway for school improvement and it may even be a difficult undertaking. Therefore schools should explore and pursue those experiences they believe are important to initiate development in school and in the community they serve. Team building, trust and relationships are important building blocks that may enable educators to become more involved in shared decision-making activities. This may give them a sense of power sharing. It would also enable educators to embrace change rather than resist it. Schools must learn to conceptualise the larger educational needs in schools and their communities and forces they operate in.

If schools are to develop into learning organisations, the principal and heads of departments need to be more sensitive to the needs of learners and teachers. They

should recognise that teachers are overloaded and should be more sensitive about supporting them and enabling them to deal with their daily challenges. Schools should use all their expertise to pursue viable partnerships with all actors in the field of education to contribute to their objective of becoming learning organisations and not wait for handouts from the WCED. There is a need for school leaders to create an intellectual and moral authority as well as new models of engagements. School leaders should create the type of engagement that includes all role players in the educational process.

As already stated elsewhere, schools are populated by people and as such are complex organisations, because it is difficult to predict and control human behaviour. Therefore, developing schools into learning organisations needs more than material proliferation, but strong leadership, effective management, good mentoring programmes and an ability to turn existing resources into results. This in turn brings us to the element of authority that is associated with power. I argue that if schools have quality leadership, then power would be used more discreetly, which can greatly advance quality education and ultimately development. School leaders should use their authority to nurture professional development of their teachers through good mentoring and support.

As schools develop into learning organisations, the WCED and EMDCs in turn benefit from it because schools now consist of motivated teachers that are committed to quality education. This means the WCED can now spend more time on curricular, policy and management issues, which is necessary in this turbulent educational environment rather than running back and forth, putting out fires with regards to violence, crime, abuses and conflict. Schools should increase interpersonal communication and interaction between educators and extend this relationship to a further partnership with parents.

5.3.4 Teachers

It is often said that teaching is doing more than working seven hours per day and covering the curriculum. Teachers have to teach, do research, build relationships and engage with learners, colleagues and parents. Teachers also have to commit themselves to a call of duty that goes beyond transmitting knowledge to learners but also becoming good role models. A commitment to these characteristics will improve the quality of teaching, which will ultimately improve learner performance. To improve the quality of education, I argue that the teachers' effectiveness must be increased first.

As argued earlier, schools need more than material proliferation. There is a need for more productive engagement with learners in the classroom. This means strengthening the capacity of teachers to meet the critical challenges that exist in classrooms. However, resources are not ruled out of the equation of development. In fact, as the developmental process unfolds in schools, the availability of resources will greatly support development of schools. Procurement of resources in school can lead to a more collaborative relationship between educators and the WCED that may lead to the prioritisation of resources. Also, with a collaborative approach to teaching, educators become more resourceful in terms of creating their own resources or creatively work without them. As a result, attention can be given to more important issues. Sharing of resources can also lead to a close collaborative relationship between colleagues in schools as well as a networking relationship between schools, District Offices, circuit teams and Head Office.

Through greater teacher involvement in the decision-making process, leadership emerges on all levels in schools. To facilitate meaningful restructuring, a collaborative environment is needed to enable educators to easily cope with the current stressful conditions under which they have to teach. This collaborative environment opens up the channels for communication that would make it easy for teachers to provide quality education and to develop professionally. Collaboration is linked to deliberation in that it opens the door to forms of legitimacy. As Tschentscher (2004:74) points out "deliberation conceptually always precedes decision." The educators benefit significantly from deliberation because the unnecessary stress of

access to limited resources and lack of time is greatly reduced. Teachers should be allowed greater involvement in decisions that directly affect their work and they should have access to more information and a chance to better understand key issues under consideration.

I argue that a communicative idea of deliberative democracy could alter the WCEDs understanding of a learning organisation. This can be done by creating and maintaining effective communication between all three tiers of the education system. This includes allowing teachers freedom of expression and involvement in important educational processes and matters relating to teaching and learning. A communicative idea of deliberative democracy also support fair procedures and individual rights of educators.

Through deliberative democracy, teacher development becomes a culture rather than a burden placed on them. There is no need for teachers to become overwhelmed, frustrated and burdened by policies that dictate with no support or limited resources. Teachers should assume the role of change agents rather than resisting change. This can be done by giving teachers a more interactive role in the continuous development of education. The education system needs teachers who can challenge current models and generate models of their own, which can be fed back for testing and refinement, elaboration and discussion.

Teachers are confronted by more than just teaching experiences. Teachers have multiple roles and are confronted with poverty, child abuse, HIV/Aids orphans, crime, drug abuse, rape and other domestic issues. No wonder teachers are burdened with emotions and stress and are over-worked. Under these conditions teachers still have to deal with many administrative and developmental issues. It is for this reason that teachers need to align themselves with parents and care givers to enable them to alleviate stress and deal with educational and social challenges. Finally, teachers should come to the realisation that “South African education is awakening to the fact that policy ideals seldom match classroom realities” (Sayed & Jansen 2001:2). This means educators should proactively engage with restructuring their own classroom practice and not wait on the WCED to initiate restructuring. This could best be done

through ongoing communicative processes between schools, District Offices and the WCED.

5.3.5 School governing bodies

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the South African Schools Act (1996) has given SGBs significant authority in the day-to-day management of schools. These responsibilities require skills, commitment and close collaboration with school management, teachers, EMDC officials and WCED authorities. A close collaboration between all role players especially WCED officials may reduce the “perception amongst interested parties that the powers and expertise of the SGBs are undermined by the Department” (Clase *et al.* 2007:250). Furthermore, more ongoing and quality training programmes and workshops should be presented to make SGB more familiar with the content and conditions of the South African Schools Act so that more informed decisions are made and members be made more competent to assist schools in becoming learning organisations.

As a former member of a SGB I argue that many SGBs especially in historical disadvantaged schools still do not perform their functions according to legislation. The problem may emanate from the WCEDs structuralist approach in terms of trying to get structures in place with regards to service provision, goals and practices that they create a bigger gap between policies and implementation.

5.3.6 Learners

It is commonly accepted that learners are mostly service beneficiaries and that one could not expect of them to contribute much to education. Their contribution is long term and their primary focus is to make maximum use of the education provided to them to become productive moral citizens in their communities. I argue that such a notion is skewed, since learners do have a meaningful contribution to make to education. Learners should learn how to take responsibility for their ideas and actions so that they can make informed decisions. They should also learn to think critically so that they become responsible citizens that can function in a wider democratic culture. Also learners can play a meaningful role to assist, motivate and mentor their peers.

This will significantly reduce the workload of educators and instil a sense of pride in learners.

Schools in the Western Cape are struggling with social challenges, drug abuse and gangsterism. These social evils are threatening the development of education and our nation as a whole. I argue that learners who are truly committed to quality education can greatly benefit from qualified teachers who are skilled and knowledgeable in their subject matter. Also, as mentioned earlier, if learners develop a commitment to contribute to their own education, it could make educators' task so much easier.

Learners have a definite contribution to make to add value to education through simply abstaining from drug abuse and gangsterism, which threaten to impede the development of education in the Western Cape. Learners should equip themselves with the knowledge, understanding and skill that would enable them to contribute meaningfully to their communities. I argue that, although the WCED has acknowledged this notion through the establishment of the RSLs, it is still the case that local schools and the WCED do not give learners adequate scope for participation. Furthermore, RCLs cannot develop to their full potential if they continue to be marginalised.

5.3.7 Parents

Schools should create an interdependence that develops from common goals and shared values with parents. Parents have the right to some control over the social institution. Parents need an in-depth understanding of how schools operate and what makes learning more effective so that they could assist their children to become responsible and effective learners. This would also lead to an increased parental involvement in the education of their children and influence mother-child communication. This interest should develop out of a desire to help their children take responsibility for their own learning. A close collaborative relationship between educators and parents will assist parents to effectively help their children becoming responsible learners.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THIS INQUIRY

This section highlights some of the major difficulties encountered in the process of conducting this inquiry. I have to acknowledge that no research is without flaws and this inquiry is no exception. In documenting the limitations of this study I draw on four areas that contributed to the challenges of this project. They include: time, geographical distance, resistance by Head Office staff to be interviewed, and finally, the general scope of this research.

- In relation to time it has to be understood that the WCED's restructuring process is a work in progress. As a result, the restructuring of the WCED occurred concurrently with this investigation. While these research data were being processed and documented, the restructuring process unfolded. As a result some of the recommendations contained in this study may be in a process of implementation while this dissertation is under examination. The other time factor pertains to the limitation of time to involve more interviewees in order to gain an even broader perspective on the relevant educational discourses.
- It would have been ideal to involve all eight EMDCs in the interview process. This would have added more substance and an extended perspective to this study. However, the geographical distance between all these EMDCs would have required extensive travelling, which would have meant that accommodation would have to be found to do all the interviews; this in turn would have had larger financial implications than could be managed at the time.
- Identifying interviewees does not guarantee an interview. Some Head Office and EMDC directors appeared very reluctant to grant interviews. Some of them made absolutely sure that I had gone through all the departmental requirements before they could even consider an interview. At first they wanted to ascertain whether I had written permission to conduct interviews. After showing them my written proof, I was then told that the timing is not

good, that they were not the ideal person to talk to, or that I have to schedule an interview with their secretaries. This caused substantial delays in my research time. Some never gave me the interview and referred me to their website if I require information in their department. They tended to perceive research as a means of highlighting their inadequacies and judging their performances.

- Also the number of respondents that I interviewed does not fully represent the view of the WCED as a whole. I have tried to consult with many of those individuals who are directly involved with service provision. This is a critical hermeneutical inquiry that is subject to interpretation. This means that many other role players in the Western Cape education sector may have different views. Furthermore, I will never be able to say with complete confidence whether the views that they expressed are indeed their true and personal views. It is not uncommon for interviewees to express a particular view and not truly believe that view. This is something researchers have to accept. However, it is possible that researcher can construct their questions in such a way as to detect contradictions and ambiguities.

5.5 REFLECTIONS ON MY JOURNEY THROUGH THIS STUDY

This section deals with my journey through this research project that stretched over a period of just more than two years. I reflect on the journey through this study because of the unique experience and enrichment it brought into my life. Doing this research on a full-time basis gave me the opportunity to spend many hours searching for and collating information relevant to this inquiry. I will reflect on the methodological dilemma I encountered from the very start. Choosing particular methods was not an easy task and required careful consideration. I then reflect on my interactions with other students and academics that I encountered at the student conference held at the University of Cape Town in 2008. I then cover my experiences with the interviews I conducted at the WCED Head Office, EMDC's and schools.

5.5.1 Methodological difficulties

In looking at the WCED's service delivery model and its objective of turning schools into learning organisations, I needed a standard by which I could judge and evaluate its progress. I decided on interpretivism, because education is a social activity, as already indicated, and is mostly subjected to interpretation. To perceive and contextualise the WCED education processes, I had to add a critical dimension to my research. Therefore to make informed recommendations and judgements I selected critical hermeneutics as a methodological framework to conduct this study.

Before I could use this approach in my investigation, I had to familiarise myself with the theories in use. Next, I had to find an appropriate way to combine these two theories to enable me to give a coherent explanation of how to understand the WCED service delivery model. Critical hermeneutics also enables me to critically reflect on my own work.

5.5.2 Conference presentation

With hindsight I have to admit that the Eighth Regional Education Students' Research Conference that I attended at UCT in 2008 gave me more than just a platform to present my research to experienced researchers and students. The comments I received on my presentation had a significant impact on my research. Especially, the comments by Professor Waghid and Dr Baxen on my presentation appeared very intimidating at first, but turned out to make an invaluable contribution to my research. Their comments specifically dealt with the significance and construction of constitutive meanings, and how constitutive meanings can be used to analyse policy. The theme of the conference focused on: Educational Research for Effective Transformation.

In reflecting on their comments I was compelled to revisit my understanding of constitutive meanings, and their application. I would highly recommend that all postgraduate students attend these kinds of student conferences. This one provided me with the opportunity to critically reflect on my own work and to open up my mind to alternative views and arguments. It also presented me with an opportunity to critically

engage with research projects of other students. The methodology that I applied to my own research could be used to engage with other students' work on how they conducted their inquiry.

I was particularly fascinated with a research presentation presented by Professor Aslam Fataar, deputy dean at the University of the Western Cape and also the guest speaker at the conference. The way other professors critically engaged with his research findings gave me insight into the way how your research should be subjected to scrutiny. I felt so inspired that I spontaneously began to record the presentation and the comments from the audience. I tried to listen very attentively to the presentation and the comments to see if I could follow the argument clearly. I had to admit that I sometimes got lost in the discourse of the research engagement. This I believe is due to my lack of critical engagement into intellectual matters. This engagement not only gave me a new sense of understanding why all research undertakings should be subjected to public scrutiny, but also how intellectual engagement with other peers can only be beneficial in sharpening one's research skills and analytical thinking.

This study greatly changed the way I engage with information. As I applied critical hermeneutics as methodological framework to this study, I begin to grasp that what I have learned from the literature was that "interpretation is grounded on understanding" (Mueller-Vollmer 1994:228). This simply means I cannot interpret something that I cannot understand. As a lay minister I became emancipated through this rich study of interpretation and construction of constitutive meanings. I can now draw from this wealth of knowledge to analyse biblical texts as I draw up my sermons with more clarity about biblical interpretation.

Through conceptual analysis I have learned skills that enable me to clarify certain concepts and then explained these concepts in terms of other related concepts and so enriched my understanding of particular matters. This skill becomes invaluable to the analysis, interpretation and construction of policies that can become very useful in one's engagement with secular and religious organisations.

5.5.3 Interview Process

The interview process was very challenging in more ways than one. First I had to learn some procedural issues that would enable me to conduct the interviews. Once permission had been obtained, the next step after identifying the respondent was to obtain their approval and then schedule a meeting with them. This was not an easy matter and some did not consent to the interviews. I had to humbly continue to the next respondent. The interview process enabled me to meet many role players in the Western Cape education system and gave me a little insight into their views on the current education system.

The following hurdle was the challenge of how to interpret and present the data in written text. Here I am indebted to Dr Lorna Holtman, a lecturer at the University of the Western Cape, for the wonderful supportive role she played in assisting me through the interview process. I had three sessions with Dr Holtman where she guided me through the interview sessions.

In spite of her busy schedule, she unselfishly availed herself to accommodate me more than once to guide and assist me with the transcribing and reporting on the interview data. Dr Holtman gave me all this assistance in spite of the fact that I am not even one of her students or a student at her university. Transcribing interviews can be a pain staking process that requires many hours of work.

5.6 SUMMARY

The overall aim of this inquiry was to conduct a critical hermeneutical inquiry into schools as learning organisations. To this end I had to critically reflect on the WCED service provision model to ascertain whether it can contribute towards schools becoming learning organisations in an environment of continual change and integration. I initiated the inquiry by first exploring the concept of a learning organisation and the factors that contribute favourably to its establishment. To conceptualise a learning organisation I constructed five constitutive meanings through a literature review and then looked at the WCED's service provision policies to

ascertain whether these policies support the WCED's objective of turning schools into learning organisations.

The reason for this reflection stems from the WCED objective to transform schools into learning organisation. Based on the literature, I concluded that schools as learning organisations can play a significant role in contributing to quality education in the Western Cape. Providing quality education for all learners is the primary objective and developing schools into learning organisations will serve as a means to this end. Before schools can be developed into learning organisations, it is important first to ascertain how the WCED understands the concept of a learning organisation.

Furthermore, the WCED's conceptualisation of a learning organisation will give impetus to their service provision model and policies they use to attain this objective. Thus the main objective of this study was to explore whether the WCED's means will justify its ends. In order to do that exploration, it was necessary to reflect on the WCED's service provision model. This reflection enabled me to understand whether the WCEDs service provision model reflect "the basis of a learning organisation identity as part of an ongoing learning process" (Brown & Starkey 2004:588).

The idea was to construct, through critical hermeneutics, a strategy in which potential conceptual inadequacies could be identified as well as the adequacy of the proposed service provision model. The difference between the existing body of knowledge and this dissertation is that I have constructed five constitutive meanings that best reflect my understanding of a learning organisation. These five constitutive meanings include quality education, inclusive education, collaborative teamwork, communication and power.

Moreover, I consider communication as a constitutive meaning the cornerstone of these constitutive meaning because it include elements like reflexive discussion, communicative freedom, consensus and decision-making processes. These elements form the basis of what constitutes a learning organisation. I therefore consider deliberative democracy as a notion of communication as the ideal mode of communication that could assist in developing schools into learning organisations. Nowhere in the literature did I find any direct references to these five constitutive

meanings with deliberative inquiry as an important mode of communication that would enable schools to develop in learning organisations. As such, I consider the construction of these five constitutive meanings as my original contribution to the body of knowledge.

Through this investigation I hope to evoke an emancipatory understanding of the idea that authority should be subjected to reason and stands to be corrected. Furthermore, the aim of this study was to create an emancipatory outcome with regards to the understanding of a learning organisation that may lead to better theorising of the concept so that more effective policies are created that articulate the needs of practitioners and learners. Also to develop policies that offers a more realistic pathway to the development of quality education. This of course with the understanding that a learning organisation cannot not develop through policy but that effective policy could make practice somewhat easier. Through the application of critical hermeneutics, new skills can be acquired in terms of critically engaging with what Lewin terms (2002:364) “policy overload and fatigue”. In the case of the WCED critical hermeneutics was applied to conceptualise its service provision model in terms of its policies, practice and interviews with important role players to ascertain the extent of its contribution to developing schools into learning organisations.

In terms of this investigation it was found that the WCED’s understanding of a learning organisation is fundamentally and conceptually flawed. This conclusion was drawn based on the evidence presented in this study through a literature review, interviews and examination of the WCED’s policies. It was found that the WCED’s service provision policies do not adequately communicate the notion of deliberative democracy. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that some policies, for example the policy of time and the HCDS policy, did not adequately promote legitimacy of collective decision-making and respectful processes of decision-making. I support the notion of Gutmann (1996:344) that claims that a decision-making procedure and process through deliberative democracy “is the most defensible justification anyone has to offer for provisionally settling controversial issues.”

Through this inquiry I noted that the WCEDs service provision model operates heavily on a managerialist approach to develop quality teaching and learning. In the

words of Gutmann & Thompson (2004:12) “A well-constituted deliberative forum” could have resulted not only in a better understanding and legitimacy of the WCEDs service provision approach but also to a possible collective consensus of the most desirable model. Such a forum could promote a base for broad representation. This raises a fundamental question of whose interest is being served by the WCEDs service provision model. Since my task was to critically evaluate and not merely to describe, I concluded that the WCEDs service provision model does not provide a convincing model on how to develop schools into learning organisations. In a deliberative process, people are more inclined to respect an outcome where their views have been taken into consideration regardless of whether the outcome is not what they expect.

I further concluded that the WCEDs focus on service provision rather than building relationships and engaging in mentoring programmes could be problematic to their aim of developing schools into learning organisations. I contend that quality education should not be equated with better resource provision. This flawed understanding of assisting schools to become learning organisation may lead to over emphasis on service provision that may in turn lead to unintended and undesirable responses and outcomes with regards to the WCED’s objective of developing schools into learning organisations. The policy on the aspect of time is a manifestation of such unintended consequences.

The challenge the WCED faces is to create a service provision model that will generate a collective awareness consensus of how best achieve the objective of developing schools into learning organisations. The outcome of a good service provision model of such a system should be assessed against a communicative notion of deliberative democracy that would foster participation, consensus through adopting a process and procedure that reflect a common understanding of seeking the fairest terms to achieve its objectives. This can be done by drawing on the skills and support of all role players in the education sector, including parents.

A deliberative process and procedure is justifiable because it would enable stakeholders take ownership the devopmental process because it would be characterised by inclusiveness, free from internal or external coercion. Furthermore, it would provide an equal opportunity for all stakeholders to critically engage with any

policy that would impact on important educational matters. In offering a justification for democratic deliberation, Shapiro (2003:121) lists “achieving consensus, discovering the truth, and consciousness-raising” as some of the benefits from engaging in deliberation.

Looking at the current educational landscape in the Western Cape, I argue that the WCED still has a long way to go to effectively address these issues in order to contribute effectively towards schools becoming learning organisations. I argue that deliberative democracy as a mode of communication that would be most appropriate for assisting schools to developing into learning organisations. It would also build a framework between the WCED, EMDC and schools that would foster continual dialogue, reflection and inquiry. This mode of communication underscores the notion of a learning organisation.

For example developing and training effective SGBs, establishing collaboration between schools, EMDCs and Head Office and building the capacity of school managers remain critical challenges in the Western Cape education system. While good synergy exists between various departments within Head Office and some EMDCs, the collaboration between the three tiers namely Head Office, EMDCs and schools remains largely problematic. Having said that, I have to acknowledge that the memorandum of agreement that “has been signed between QIDS UP and school governing bodies on how QIDS UP funding should be spend” can be viewed as a positive step towards establishing a communicative rationality that could be beneficial to schools and the WCED (WCED QIDS UP Report, 2008:15).

This initiative from QIDS UP to establish participatory democracy between the WCED and schools is aimed at building infrastructure and personnel support to the poorest schools. The same initiative should be further extended address teachers workload so that teachers are given more time to reflect on their broader responsibility of social transformation to a society ravaged by social promiscuity.

I argue that systems thinking are a more holistic approach to educational needs in the Western Cape and should be persuaded more rigorously to connect Head Office with EMDCs, schools, teachers, learners and the community. When this connection is

established the five constitutive meanings will be firmly entrenched in the operation between all three tiers, quality teaching and learning may result that could create the basis for developing schools as learning organisations. Schools and educators should also stop waiting on the WCED to assist them to resolving their challenges. They should face up to these challenges before they develop into crises.

From the literature I deduce that an individual's action is usually shaped by the organisation that he or she is a part of. I argue that the extent of an individual's impact on an organisation needs further exploration to understand more precisely why there are gaps between policy and practice and to what extent this influences the quality of teaching and learning in schools in the Western Cape. In understanding the gap between policy and practice, I argue that a process of deliberation is needed. After all, Shapiro (2003:122) argues that "deliberation is about getting the right answer." Furthermore, I argue that even though a considerable amount of power is vested in the WCED Head Office to develop schools into learning organisations, it nevertheless remains the primary responsibility of local schools in the Western Cape to espouse the vision and motivation to transform schools into learning organisations. This argument is supported by the MEC for Education in the Western Cape (WCED QIDS UP Report, 2008:4), who commented that "resources do not teach. Teachers teach." This also implies that it is up to schools and teachers to take ownership of their own development and that the availability of resources and services only serves as a means to facilitate their development.

The argument of this dissertation is that, although the WCED's current pragmatic, managerialist model of service provision may be useful for checking that important inputs, outputs and processes are in place, it does not meet the methodological requirements to effect long-term continuous improvement. Harvey (2007:19) asserts that "Quality is also defined as fitness for purpose of a product or service... Quality is thus judged by the extent to which the product or service fits a stated purpose."

If the purpose of the WCED is to develop schools into learning organisations, the use of a particular service provision model must meet the objective to transform schools into learning organisations. This service provision model should include deliberative inquiry which involve discussion and increases consensus between all important

stakeholders in the Western Cape education sector. This means improving the moral and intellectual qualities of all relevant stakeholders. Reflecting on the conditions of some schools in the Western Cape, I assert that the WCED's service provision model still has a way to go to meet its objectives. Based on interviews, practitioners do not experience effective and efficient service provision that is needed to develop schools into learning organisations. I therefore conclude that the WCEDs current service provision model lacks the theoretical foundation to effectively assist schools in developing into learning organisations. This theoretical framework includes dialogue and reflection.

Deliberative democracy allows people to participate and express their different preferences and is one of the most justifiable ways in dealing with disagreements and preserve cooperative values. In some cases it is possible that someone may have a unique knowledge about a particular situation that may be in the interest of the whole education system. In this regard communicative deliberative idea of democracy would enable an individual or group to show others how a situation look from a perspective or vantage points that others may have overlooked or not considered. Extending opportunity to all practitioners to have their say could enable better support and give people a sense of procedural fairness that would invariably increase the likelihood of supporting the WCEDs objective to assist schools becoming learning organisations.

Deliberative democracy does not necessarily implies that everyone's opinion will be adhered to, but it may lead to a self-understanding and a collective understanding about the best interest of all stakeholders and how to best develop schools into learning organisations. The fundamental aim of deliberative democracy is to legitimise the WCEDs service provision model and put collective decision-making base on the rules of argumentation at the centre of service provision.

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ANNEXTURE A



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29 February 2008

Dear Participants

PhD RESEARCH PROJECT

This inquiry is undertaken in fulfillment of the requirements of a doctoral (PhD) study. This study aims to explore factors that advance or constrain the development of schools into learning 257organisations in the Western Cape. The overall goal of the inquiry is to analyses the service delivery model of the WCED, EMD's and Circuit teams respectively.

The interviewer is a PhD candidate in the department of Education Policy Studies at Stellenbosch University, and Dr B van Wyk is the promoter.

The research is of a qualitative nature. WCED senior management officials, EMDC Directors, Circuit team members, school principals, teachers and student councils will be interviewed. The selection will consider the following: gender, race, staff and non-staff members.

We thank you for having agreed to participate in this study. At the same time, we remind you that your participation is free and voluntary. Furthermore, you privacy will be protected at all stages of the study, and when results from the study are reported. At no point will your name or any personal details be disclosed. We commit to full confidentiality.

We would like you to participate to the conclusion of the research project, but you do have the right to withdraw whenever you choose to do so.

Sincerely

Cecil J Beukes

PhD Candidate

Tel: 021 931-5738

Cell: 0761754 555

ANNEXTURE B



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PhD RESEARCH PROJECT

Participant Consent Form

I have considered the information in the PhD research project information sheet. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I retain the right to withdraw from the study at any time. By signing this form I release the information obtained from my participation in this study for Mr CJ Beukes's institutional purposes, with the understanding that it will be kept confidential and at no time will my name be used or connected with any information.

Consent

I _____ do hereby give the researcher, CJ Beukes, permission to use the interview data (if applicable) for the purposes of this research study.

Details (in order to contact interviewees)

Name of participant: _____ (confidential)

Contact tel. number _____ (confidential)

E-mail address: _____ (confidential)

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

Date

Researcher involved in this study

Mr Cecil J Beukes

PhD Candidate

Tel: 021 931-5738

Cell: 076 1754 555

E-mail: cjbeukes@hotmail.com

ANNEXURE C

Interview Questions

1. HEAD OFFICE

Director 1

- Question 1: What is the outcome the WCED hope to achieve with regards to the macro and micro structure?
- Question 2: Can I conclude that the main beneficiary in this situation would be the learner?
- Question 3: Did Head Office succeed in reducing the hierarchical structure as envisaged in its foundation?
- Question 4: Do you think restructuring is geared towards improving classroom practice?
- Question 5: Do you experience any policy gaps between Head Office and EMDCs?
- Question 6: Do you think that the WCED is doing enough to provide quality education in the Western Cape?
- Question 7: Do you think that Circuit teams are adequately equipped to deliver quality service?

Director 2

- Question 1: What is the outcome the WCED hope to achieve with regards to the macro and micro structure?
- Question 2: Can I conclude that the main beneficiary in this situation would be the learner?
- Question 3: Did Head Office succeed in reducing the hierarchical structure as envisaged in its foundation?
- Question 4: What is the main purpose of the HCDS?
- Question 5: How does the HCDS relate to classroom practice?
- Question 6: Having said that, I have noted that the restructuring process started at HO and not in classrooms where the main service beneficiary is located?

Question 7: Would you agree that the HCDS policy is a political policy that serves the interest of the ANC provincial government?

Question 8: Should it not be up to us as service providers, practitioners to make sure that there is some sort of balance between education and politics?

Question 9: Do you think that a neoliberalist approach is necessarily the best approach for educational development?

Director 3

Question 1: Can I assume that the WCED support provision acknowledge the learner as the main service beneficiary?

Question 2: Do you think restructuring is geared towards improving classroom practice?

Question 3: Do you think that Circuit teams are adequately equipped to deliver quality service?

Question 4: How would you describe the collaborative relationship between Head Office and EMDCs?

Question 5: The aspect of time is a precious commodity. Do you think that enough time is allocated for teacher development?

Question 6: Do you think there is a gap between policy of inclusive education and practice?

Question 7: So. Do you think that the WCED is doing enough to develop inclusive education?

2. EMDC Directors

Director 1

Question 1: How many components are there within an EMDC?

Question 2: How would you describe the relationship between Head Office and EMDCs with regards to collaboration?

Question 3: Are District Office adequately resource to deal with the challenges of schools and to enable schools to provide quality education?

Question 4: What are the prevailing gaps and ambiguity within EMDCs?

Question 5: What relevant evidence is there to suggest that EMDCs are providing better and sufficient service delivery?

Question 6: Do you think that enough time is allocated for teacher's in-service training?

Director 2

Question 1: Do you think that Circuit Teams are adequately equipped and trained to deal with the challenges and needs of schools?

Question 2: Do you think that EMDCs have the capacity to develop schools into learning organisations?

Question 3: Do you think that the service delivery charter contains realistic objectives, considering the budgetary constraints the WCED is experiencing?

Question 4: Is the service delivery charter realistic in its objectives taken into consideration the budgetary constraints experienced by the WCED?

3. Circuit Teams

Circuit Team Member 1

Question 1: How many members does a Circuit Team comprise of and what are their portfolios?

Question 2: Do you think enough time is being spent on teacher development to deal with curriculum changes?

Question 3: What are the challenges CT are experiencing with regards to service delivery to schools?

Question 4: What shortcomings and successes within the circuit teams do you experience in terms of delivering services to schools?

Question 5: What are the prevailing gaps and ambiguity within Circuit Teams?

Circuit Team member 2

- Question 1: Do you think enough time is being spending on teacher development to deal with curriculum changes?
- Question 2: What shortcoming and successes within the circuit teams do you experience in terms of delivering services to schools?
- Question 3: Does Circuit Teams have the capacity to effectively serve schools? If not what are those constrains?
- Question 4: What are the prevailing gaps and ambiguity within Circuit Teams?

Circuit Team member 3

- Question 1: Do you think enough time is being spent on teacher development to deal with curriculum changes?
- Question 2: Does Circuit Teams have the capacity to effectively serve schools? If not what are those constrains?
- Question 3: What shortcoming and successes within the circuit teams do you experience in terms of delivering services to schools?
- Question 4: Do circuit teams have enough resources and capacity to fulfil the needs of schools?
- Question 5: Do you think curriculum advisors are adequately trained to assist educators to deal with curriculum developments?

4. Schools Principals

- Question 1: Do schools experience better service provision than before?
School Principal 1,2,3 & 4
- Question 2: If not, what is your expectation of improved service delivery?
Principal 2 & 3
- Question 3: What challenges does schools experience with regards to lines of communication to Head Office, EMDCs or Circuit Teams?
Principal 1, 2, 3 & 4

Question 4: What are the Positive & Negative effects of EMDCs and Circuit Teams on local schools?

Principal 1,2 & 3

Question 5: How often does MFTs visit your school to render support?

Principal 1,2,3 & 4

Question 6: Do MFTs spend adequate time in assisting ESTs and EMTs with their challenges?

Principal 1 & 4

Question 7: Do think that MFTs are adequately equipped to deal with all problems encountered by schools?

Principal 1 &4

Question 8: How does EMDCs respond to the crime and drug abuse challenges in schools?

Principal 1,2,3 & 4

5. Teachers

Question 1: How do the WCEDs head office restructuring process benefits classroom teaching?

Educator 1 & 2

Question 2: Do you feel adequate time is allocated for the development of teachers and teachers training?

Educator 1 & 2

Question 3: Do you think the teacher's workload justifies the amount of teaching time?

Educator 1 & 2

Question 4: Do teachers have adequate consultation between school management teams and circuit teams?

Teacher 1

Question 5: Are you satisfied with the lines of communication between teachers and Circuit Teams or are there too much bureaucratic processes that influence the lines of communication?

Educator 1 & 2