

CONSEQUENCES OF STAFF DEPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN CAPE TOWN

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores the effect that staff deployment has on the morale and professional attitudes of educators who have been identified as being in excess at their schools. The study was done by doing interviews with teachers who have been affected by rightsizing and redeployment and principals who have had to manage the process.

The Department of Education goes through an annual process of determining the school's staff establishment for the next academic year. This determination is based on the number of learners enrolled at the institution. The CEMIS statistics are used to determine the number of learners enrolled at the school and the schools' staff establishment for the next academic year. If a school's learner numbers have increased since the last survey, the school will gain some teaching posts. Conversely, if the learner numbers have dropped a number of educators at the institution, as determined by the education department, have to be identified and declared in excess. Change associated with staff redeployment can have a negative impact on the morale and motivation of teachers. A school's functioning and ability to supply quality education can also be compromised as a result thereof. This is especially true when schools do not have the financial resources to employ additional teachers out of school funds.

The problem is researched by exploring the 'lived experiences' of selected teachers at primary schools in two of the education districts that fall under the WCED. Educators who were selected to participate in the study were individuals who had been declared in excess and who were redeployed or who were awaiting redeployment.

Teachers were given the opportunity to relate their individual experiences. Their accounts of the process reflect how these experiences affect behaviour, professional attitude and general health. The researcher's discussion of their perceptions pays particular attention to their perceptions of how their general health and well-being were affected. Two principals (who managed the process at their respective schools) also shed some light on their experiences of the effects of downsizing.

It seems that whilst there are cases where the process of rightsizing and redeployment is handled with the necessary care and circumspection, this is not always the case. Too often rightsizing and redeployment are handled in a clinical way, which creates the impression that the principals are biased and unsympathetic.

Keywords: rightsizing, redeployment, reorganising schools / education, relocation of teachers/educators, staff redundancy in education, teachers/educators in excess.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie kwalitatiewe studie ondersoek die effek wat personeel ontplooiing op onderwysers het wie oortollig verklaar word by hul skole. Dit beoog ook om vas te stel tot watter mate die persoon se professionele gedrag en moraal geaffekteer word hierdeur. Tydens die studie was data ingesamel deur onderhoude te voer met onderwysers wie oortollig verklaar is, en prinsipale wat hierdie proses moes bestuur.

Jaarliks gaan die Departement van Onderwys deur 'n proses waar skole se onderwysvoorsiening vir die volgende jaar bepaal word deur die aantal leerders wat by die skool ingeskryf is. Die stelsel wat deur die WKOD gebruik word om leerder inskrywings by skole te bepaal, word die Sentrale Opvoedingsbestuur en Inligting Stelsel genoem. Fundamenteel tot die proses is die feit dat indien 'n skool se leerdertal vermeerder het sedert die vorige opname, sal die skool addisionele onderwysers win. Indien die inskrywingstotaal egter gedaal het, word die aantal onderwysers wat aan die skool voorsien word verminder. Verandering wat deur die onderwyser herontplooing teweegbring word kan 'n negatiewe uitwerking op die moraal en motivering van onderwysers het. Die funksionering van skole en hul vermoë om gehalteonderrig te voorsien kan ook negatief beïnvloed word daardeur. Dit is veral skole wat dit nie kan bekostig om addisionele onderwysers aan te stel en uit skoolfonds te besoldig nie, wat die swaarste getref word hierdeur.

Die probleem word nagefors deur te kyk na 'n paar onderwysers in primêre skole in twee opvoedingsdistrikte wat onder die WKOD werksaam is. Onderwysers wat deel vorm van die studie is persone wat oortollig verklaar is en verplaas is, of wie nog wag op verplasing.

Hierdie studie het onderwysers se ervarings van die herontplooingsproses bestudeer. Onderwysers was die geleentheid gegee om hul ervarings met die navorser te deel en sodoende lig te werp op hoe die proses hul gedrag, professionele houding en algemene gesondheid geraak het.

Die navorser het getoon dat terwyl daar gevalle is waar die proses van regstellende aksie en herontplooiing met die nodige sorg en omsigtigheid hanteer word, is dit nie altyd die norm nie. Hierdie proses word ten tye op 'n kliniese wyse hanteer en dit skep die indruk dat die prinsipaal onsimpatiek is en nie nutraal staan in die proses nie.

Sleutelwoorde: regstellende aksie, reorganisasie van skole/opvoeding, herontplooing van onderwysers, personeel oortolligheid in skole

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	:	African National Congress
CEMIS	:	Central Education Management Information System
COSATU	:	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CS Educators:		Educators are defined as CS (College School) Educators. (It is an appointment category within the education system and coded on PERSAL. It includes school and office-based educators.)
DENOSA	:	Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa
ELRC	:	Education Labour Relations Council
ESE	:	Educator Staff Establishment
GEAR	:	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	:	International Monetary Fund
IMG Advisor	:	Institutional Management and Governance Advisor (New term used for Circuit Manager / School Inspector)
NAPTOSA	:	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa
NEHAWU	:	National Education Health and Allied Workers' Union
NP	:	National Party
PAM	:	Personnel Administration Measures
PAWUSA	:	Public & Allied Workers' Union
PED	:	Provincial Education Department
POPCRU	:	Police and Prison Civil Rights Union
PSCBC	:	Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council
SACP	:	South African Communist Party
SADTU	:	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SAPU	:	South African Policing Union
SASA	:	South African Schools Act
SGB	:	School Governing Body
VSP	:	Voluntary Severance Package
WCED	:	Western Cape Education Department

CHAPTER ONE

AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PURPOSE, NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE INVESTIGATION

1.1 Introduction

Every year the Department of Education does an annual survey to determine the number of learners enrolled at each school.

In the Western Cape, an online system (Central Education Management and Information System – CEMIS) is used to track the movement of every learner within the school system. At the end of the tenth school day of each year, CEMIS is locked for an allocated time so that no more transfers in or out of a school can be registered. The number of learners enrolled at that time is used to determine the staff establishment at each school for the next academic year. The Western Cape Education Department's (WCED) Human Capital Planning Minute 4/2009 gives the following explanatory information:

[The] WCED will take a snap shot of the learner data of all schools on CEMIS. This implies that the data on the system determine a school's (educator staff establishment) ESE. Should the data not be updated, then the school will lose out on the number of educators assigned to the school.

Schools therefore risk losing teacher posts at the school for the next academic year if the increase in learner numbers is not recorded on CEMIS by the tenth day.

If, however, a school's learner numbers have dropped since the last survey, the education department has to determine the number of educators at the institution to be declared in excess. This is based on the current learner-teacher ratio of 38 learners to one educator at mainstream primary schools and 35 learners to one educator at secondary schools (38:1 and 35:1). Schools that cater for learners with special educational needs have a more favourable learner-teacher ratio. Once the number of educators in excess has been determined, the Education Department sends an educator staff establishment (ESE) letter to inform the school what their

staff establishment for the next year is. This is done by September of the preceding year. In a school that has to lose teaching posts, the particular teachers in excess first have to be identified by the school management, governing body and officials (Circuit Managers) from the local area office. In terms of Resolution 7 of 2002, educators who have been declared in excess at an institution have the option of applying for placement at another school where there is a vacant substantive post, to being redeployed involuntarily or resigning. The process and conditions for the rightsizing in education and the subsequent redeployment of educators is governed by Resolution 7 of 2002 and the later amendment (Resolution 8 of 2002).

Change associated with staff redeployment can have a negative impact on the morale and motivation of teachers. Consequently, a school's functioning and ability to supply quality education may be compromised. This is especially true when schools do not have the financial resources to employ additional teachers out of school funds.

1.2 The Need for Change in the Education Sector – a Historical Perspective

In order to explain to the reader why redeployment occurs, it is necessary to refer to the educational dispensation before 1994. The reason for using 1994 as a dividing line is that the new government led by the ANC which came to power then dramatically changed the South African education landscape. This section explains why the new government felt it necessary to radically reform the pre-1994 education system.

In the past, Education in South Africa had been used by governments as a vehicle to influence the thinking of the masses. The assumption was that if children (the adults of tomorrow) bought into the policies and practices of the ruling party, then it was more likely that the status quo would remain unchallenged in the years to come. This was evident in the way that the National Party government used education to entrench the doctrine of Apartheid. A number of laws including the Bantu Education Act of 1953 were used by the government to frame education for black people during the Apartheid years.

Under National Party rule the government adopted the policy of Apartheid, which used race as a criterion to determine whether or not certain groups would enjoy privileges. Bantu Education marginalised and disempowered the majority of the country's citizens. Black learners were trained to take subservient roles like manual labourers or servants. As Oaks (1992: 379) points out, Verwoerd (one of the architects of Apartheid) explained that Africans had to be measured by different standards:

The school must equip the Bantu to meet the demands which the economic life ... will impose on him What is the use of teaching Bantu child mathematics when it cannot use it in practice? Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life.

Considerably more money was spent on the education of white citizens than on the other groups. This practice entrenched the differences in the quality of education provided for the different races.

Apartheid education in South Africa promoted race, class, gender and ethnic divisions and has emphasised separateness, rather than common citizenship and nationhood. The fiscal allocation in terms of race, where white education enjoyed more funding, resulted in wide-scaled disparities with regard to all aspects of education. This included: quality of teacher training, level of teacher training, resources at schools, location of schools, support materials and almost every aspect of educational service delivery. (Naicker 2000: 1)

These practices entrenched the policy of separate development.

South Africa became a democracy in 1994 in the sense that all citizens, regardless of race, sex or class were eligible to vote. The ANC government that was voted into power, however, "inherited a racially divided and discriminatory education system to which the National Party had in its early 1990s reforms, added elements of a market driven system" (Lemon, 2004:269).

In the last years of National Party government schools that in the past had exclusively catered for whites were given the option of opening their doors to learners of all races if a majority of the parents who had children enrolled at the school agreed to do so. I believe that that was a sign that the National Party government was starting to give in to pressures from both the local groups and international communities to change its stance on segregation of the races.

The pre-1994 education system of the country was fragmented: there were 18 different homeland or racially divided education departments. There were also major inequalities between the different departments because of the previous government's education funding policies. One result was that white schools in urban areas had a favourable teacher-learner ratio whilst black schools in urban areas had to cope with overcrowding.

Naiker (2000:1) provides a stark analysis of the situation:

...apartheid education in South Africa promoted race, class, gender and ethnic divisions and has emphasised separateness, rather than common citizenship and nationhood. The fiscal allocation in terms of race, where white education enjoyed more funding, resulted in wide-scale disparities with regard to all aspects of education. This included: quality of teacher training, level of teacher training, resources at schools, location of schools, support materials and almost every aspect of educational service delivery.

Chisholm (2004: 204) highlights another aspect that affected the quality of education for black learners:

The state of South Africa's schools in 1994 can only be described as parlous. Beset by conflict for well over two decades, the majority of black schools suffered not only from state-imposed deprivations, but also from what many observers referred to as the collapse of a culture of teaching and learning.

The post-1994 government saw an urgent need for transformation of the country's education sector. One aspect that needed to be addressed was the redistribution of physical and human resources because the financial privileges the white schools enjoyed meant they had better facilities as well as a lower teacher-learner ratio than the other groups in South Africa. The national Department of Education went through a process of collective bargaining with teacher unions before deciding on the measures needed to level the playing fields. These measures were contained in Resolution 7 of 2002, Personnel Administrative Measures – PAM (1999) and subsequent amendments, as well as the Norms and Standards for School Funding (1998).

1994 was a watershed in the history of South Africa. The country's first democratically elected government had taken up office and was gearing itself

towards enacting some major changes to the South African socio-political landscape. These changes were perceived to be necessary to address the imbalances caused by the Apartheid policy of the previous government. Education was in no way immune to the impending changes. Lemon (2004:269) argues that the government had inherited “a racially divided and discriminatory education system to which the National Party government had in the early 1990’s reform, added elements of a market driven system”. The elements of freedom of choice in the market driven system, which was part of the neo-liberal system, were the post-1994 government’s attempts to decentralise decision-making to local school governing bodies and allow for local school to charge fees which would boost the school’s coffers. At the same time schools were allowed or, in some cases, forced, through various forms of legislation, to open their doors for all race groups.

The government knew that the steps towards integration and the move towards equal funding for all schools, even to a limited extent, would inevitably strain the financial resources of the country. The option was to embrace some aspects of neo-liberalism in education that would soften the impact on the government’s financial resources. Schools were allowed to levy fees which they could use to appoint extra teachers. School Governing Bodies could now play an important role in the appointment of teachers and even create posts internally at the school and appoint teachers who were paid out of school funds.

Chisholm (1999) says that “national policy sought between 1995 and 1997 to redeploy resources, teachers, from areas of over-supply, white and black urban, to areas of under-supply, poor black and rural (schools).” One can deduce from this statement that not only white schools lost teachers through redeployment. Black schools where the staff complement was above the establishment for the institution also lost teachers. It was more a matter of redistributing resources from the better-resourced schools in urban/city areas to schools in rural/farm areas.

Great imbalances existed between the white schools and schools under the black education departments. There was an urgent need to redistribute the available human and physical resources more equitably. The new government realised that they do not have funds available to employ additional staff members to get a better teacher-learner ratio in black schools. Human capital from white privileged

schools had to be redistributed to black underprivileged schools.
(Chisholm, 2004: 210)

The policy of redeployment was as readily implemented as the education authorities had hoped it would be. One of the reasons is the degree of acceptance or rejection by the teachers and the teachers unions. The fact that Government and the Unions did not share the same vision was a stumbling block:

Initially both teacher' organisations NAPTOSA (National Association for Professional Teachers' Associations) and SADTU (South African Democratic Teachers' Union) rejected the policy. Whereas NAPTOSA led representation to government, SADTU teachers first embraced, then rejected the policy ... By the late 1997, the government was admitting that the policy was in disarray. (Chisholm, 1999:120)

Though Chisholm suggests that only white schools were at the receiving end of the redeployment process, I want to argue that all schools, irrespective of their racial composition were affected by redeployment in some way or the other. Crain Soudien (2001:33) did research in the early 2000s "to understand the impact of restructuring of the teaching corps in schools in the former House of Representatives (Coloured) educational system". His study was done at a number of Coloured schools that were due to lose a number of educators to retrenchments and redeployment. On these grounds, it is safe to assume that not only White, but also Black and Coloured schools were affected by redeployment. Schools in towns had better infrastructure and more teachers. It was these schools who had to redeploy teachers in favour of rural, under-resourced schools.

As Chisholm (1999:120) points out, at the time "[l]arge numbers of white and black teachers were applying for Voluntary Severance Packages (VSP)". The exercise of redeployment was thus not as successful as was hoped. Apart from the Teacher Unions not embracing the plan and coming on board, an overwhelming number of teachers who were declared in excess at their schools opted to take advantage of the Voluntary Severance Package (VSP) offered to them. They saw this as a better option than being redeployed to schools far away from their homes or to school different from the schools where they were teaching. Some of these teachers who accepted a VSP were reabsorbed into posts created by school governing bodies

and funded by the parents who wanted a more favourable teacher-learner ratio for their children.

The process of teacher redeployment is an ongoing issue that still affects schools and teachers today. As learner enrolment numbers fluctuate from year to year, schools constantly face the challenge of keeping their enrolment numbers up to avoid having teacher posts being cut at the school.

1.3 Rationale

Because of the division caused by the Apartheid education system, some radical changes were needed:

Eighteen racially-divided departments were restructured into one national and nine provincial departments and the National Education Policy Act (1995) was introduced, establishing the foundations for an integrated system of education based on an Outcomes-Based rather than a Christian National Education philosophy. Education budgets began to be designed in principle to achieve equitable outcomes and overcome the racial disparities that marked apartheid budget allocations. Funding for school building programmes and school meals was made available. Schools, colleges, technikons and universities were opened to all races. (Chisholm 2004:205)

The ANC-led government had to prove to the masses that they were serious about changing discriminatory laws and systems.

A further development to transform the education landscape was the introduction of the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 which, among other things, provided for the establishment of public and independent schools. Albeit to a limited extent, control was decentralised to school level and School Governing Bodies (SGB) were empowered to make decisions in the best interests of the schools. This was based on the assumption that SGBs operate at grassroots level within school communities and so they would be in a better position to decide on issues affecting individual schools. Curriculum 2005 was introduced to revamp the education sector and replace the education practices of the Apartheid era. The methods of assessment, qualifications and certification were changed to be in line with the principles of Curriculum 2005. This was an outcomes-based form of education which required teachers to become facilitators of learning and to inform learners beforehand what outcomes were to be achieved. However, the Education

Department was aware that although the state had implemented these radical changes, there were severe budgetary constraints on what could be spent on education. This problem could partly be overcome by embracing some neo-liberal policies and introducing of school fees.

The payment of school fees was not a new concept as it had been used by the National Party government. The difficulty was that the ANC-led government had made free education one of its election promises. Now it had to reassess the feasibility of doing so. Hofmeyr (2000:2) explains the reasoning behind these changes as follows: "This wholesale system change must be understood against a background where South Africa spends 23 percent of its national budget and 7 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product on education". As a developing country, South Africa is spending a big portion of its GDP on education. In spite of this, it is still not enough to eliminate the vast inequalities that exist in the country. Latching on to some neo-liberal policies has enabled it to honour its social responsibility of providing education by tapping into private resources. Schools receive only a limited budget from the state and so have to source funds from the private sector (in the form of donations) and parents (paying of school fees).

There was also a definite need to redistribute the available resources more equitably so that the teacher-pupil ratio in under-resourced schools could be improved. A major reason for the redeployment of educators was financial. According to Chisholm (2004: 208), education spending amounted to 7.3% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1991 and 1992 and 5.5% of GDP between 2001 and 2004. Education authorities reasoned that they had more than enough teachers in the system, but that most of these teachers were concentrated in the more privileged urban schools whilst rural schools were understaffed. Keeping the budget within limits was one challenge. Improving both equity and quality within the context of constrained resources was another. In the first few years after 1994, the intention was to achieve both by redistributing teachers (the highest cost in the budget) from better-resourced, white and mainly urban schools to under-resourced, black and mainly rural schools (Chisholm. 2004: 210).

On paper it seemed that it would be a simple exercise to redistribute these human resources to the schools that had to cope with overcrowding and poor quality

education. The first attempt at redeployment, however, failed because the teacher unions and teachers would not buy into the programme:

In 1996, teachers in coloured schools in Cape Town marched on departmental offices, claiming amongst others that that the policy had a discriminatory effect on women teachers with families. Large numbers of white and black teachers were applying for Voluntary Severance Packages, which proved to be more expensive than the department had bargained for... When redeployment was re-introduced for 1999, the union (SADTU) accepted this conditionally. (Chisholm, 1999:120)

Schools in privileged areas very quickly found a system that would enable them to keep low teacher-learner ratios. Schools, whose parents could afford it, raised their school fees. It enabled them to appoint the additional staff members out of school funds as Governing Body employees and thus keep the teacher-learner ratio down.

We have seen in the previous section that the government does not have the financial resources to give all schools the resources they need in order to ensure quality education. The adoption of the neo-liberal policies that allow schools to boost the state allocation by charging school fees was thus a way of solving the problem. If some parents can afford to pay extra to ensure that their children get a more favourable learner-teacher ratio and better resources, then they should be given the freedom to do this. However, the government still needed to declare teachers in excess and to redeploy such individuals.

Another aim of the changes was to minimise the financial burden that government faced “by shifting part of the burden for costs onto parents through school fees” (Chisholm, 2004: 210). Even this decision had some unintended consequences which widened the gap between those schools which already had the resources and those who did not.

The result of South Africa’s fee paying policy has been that richer public schools have been able to retain their privilege and edge over poor schools by employing additional teachers and improved resources to ensure better quality teaching. Poorer schools, on the other hand, have not charged high fees but are often unable to extract even their low fees from impoverished parents. (Chisholm, 2004)

This is an example of the unintentional consequences of the neo-liberal policy. Schools can compete on an open 'market' for the best learners and staff members for the institution. It also gives them the option of using school fees to boost their state allocated funds. Parents and learners have the freedom to decide which school is best. On the other hand, schools in poorer communities have to keep their fees to a minimum to make it possible for the local communities to afford them. Parent's choice in these communities is limited, not only by the number of schools available, but by the amount of money that they can afford to spend on school fees.

The researcher will discuss in detail the neo-liberal philosophy and its implications for South African education and staffing practices in more detail in Chapter Two.

1.4 Research Questions

The question that I investigated in this thesis is:

Does the process of declaring a teacher in excess and the redeployment of this teacher have a negative effect on his/her attitude towards education, his/her professional performance and/or his/her general health and well-being?

Some of the sub-questions I investigated in the process are:

- (a) *The realities of staff establishment allocation. How does the fluctuation of staff establishment impact on the relations and performance of a school, especially schools that cannot absorb the loss of educators by employing additional staff members out of school funds.*
- (b) *What impact does being declared in excess have on the performance and morale of a teacher?*
- (c) *What are the policy background and the legislative framework of redeployment and the subsequent influences on teachers and their work relations and performance?*
- (d) *What impact does the adoption of neo-liberal policies have on staff provisioning for schools?*

For the purposes of my investigation, I selected teachers at primary schools in two of the Education districts that resort under the Western Cape Education

Department. Educators in the Mitchells Plain area (Metropole South Education District) and some from the Belhar / Kuils River area (Metropole Central Education District) of the Western Cape who:

- (i) have been declared in excess and are awaiting redeployment,
- (ii) have in the past been declared in excess and have been redeployed, or
- (iii) have in the past been declared in excess and opted to resign.

1.5 Aims of This Research

In doing this research, the researcher had three aims in mind:

- I firstly wanted to give school managers, circuit managers and policy makers, who have to manage the process of declaring teachers in excess and affect their redeployment, some insight into the effect of the process on staff morale and their general well-being.
- Secondly, I wished to determine the extent to which the attitude and professional abilities of teachers are affected by rightsizing and redeployment. My hope was that this study would improve the management of the process and reduce the negative spin offs on schools and staff.
- Thirdly, I hoped to stimulate debate and thus raise awareness of the effect that staff provisioning and redeployment has on human beings. School managers tend to lose sight of this and try to keep the process as clinical as possible.

1.6 Research Design

I did a search on EBSCOhost / Google / ERIC websites using the following keywords:

rightsizing in education, redeployment, redistribution of resources in education, posting of teachers / educators, reorganising schools / education, relocation of teachers / educators, staff redundancy in education, teachers / educators in excess, etc.

I used SABINET online database for current and complete master's and doctoral research theses related to the topics such as staff provisioning, organisational management, and rightsizing. I also reviewed books and articles related to these

topics to “gain some insight and other perspectives” (Leedy & Ormrod. 2005: 64) on the research problem.

A literary review was done using books and articles related to the problem and sub problems because “[l]iterary reviews are important because [they give one] an insight into previous research and existing theories in the specific problem area” (Vermeulen 1998:21). The function of literary reviews “is to look again (re+view) at what others have done in areas that are similar, though not necessarily identical to one’s own area of investigation” (Leedy & Ormrod. 2005: 64). Some of the documents that I consulted include:

- Legislation regarding redundancy and redeployment of educators;
- Policy and circulars regarding the issue of rightsizing and redeployment;
- Articles and publications found on EBSCOhost and other internet sources;
- Books related to the topic;
- Theses, dissertations, research articles and articles in journals.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 64-65) list various benefits of doing a literature review:

It can offer new ideas, perspectives, and approaches that may not have occurred to you. It can inform you about other researchers who conduct work in this area. It can show you how others have handled methodological and design issues in studies similar to your own. It can reveal sources of data that you may not have known existed. It can introduce you to measurement tools that other researchers have developed and used effectively. It can reveal methods of dealing with problem situations that may be similar to the difficulties you are facing. It can help you interpret and make sense of your findings and, ultimately, help you tie your results with the work of those who have preceded you. It will bolster your confidence that your topic is worth studying, because you will find that others have invested considerable time, effort, and resources in studying it.

I used a **qualitative research** approach. This method is also referred to as the “*interpretative, constructivist* or the *post positivist* approach” (Leedy & Ormrod. 1989:101). I felt that this method would best suit my research because it enables the researcher to use a small sample of participants who can shed some light on the problem under investigation. This small sample of six participants (four teachers and two principals) would suffice for this study as I would be able to draw some conclusions that could be applied over a wider spectrum.

I took a **phenomenological approach** to research design. As Lester (1999:1) explains:

The purpose of the phenomenological approach is to illuminate the specific, to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation. In the human sphere this normally translates into gathering 'deep' information and perceptions through inductive, qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions and participant observation, and representing it from the perspective of the research participant(s). Phenomenology is concerned with the study of experience from the perspective of the individual, 'bracketing' taken-for-granted assumptions and usual ways of perceiving... As such they are powerful for understanding subjective experience, gaining insights into people's motivations and actions, and cutting through the clutter of taken-for-granted assumptions and conventional wisdom.

Finlay (2009:8) takes a similar view:

[P]henomenological research is phenomenological when it involves both rich description of the lifeworld or lived experience, and where the researcher has adopted a special, open phenomenological attitude which, at least initially, refrains from importing external frameworks and sets aside judgements about the realness of the phenomenon.

In this thesis I will attempt to capture the "lived experience" of educators who have experienced or managed the process of rightsizing and redeployment.

This research design was chosen to help me "to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understanding of a particular situation." (Leedy & Ormrod 2005:153) I interviewed the individual educators concerned to find out about their experiences of being declared in excess and being redeployed. The principals were asked how the process of declaring teachers in excess affects the school and its functioning. The result of the investigation has provided me with insights into the way in which this phenomenon affects the broader education community.

The collection of supporting data involved conducting semi-structured interviews and/ or focus groups with a select number of educators and school principals who had been through the process of rightsizing and / or redeployment. I limited my sample to four educators who had been declared in excess and two school

principals who had dealt with the process of declaring educators in excess. One principal was at a school where the loss of a departmental post could be absorbed by employing an educator out of school funds. The second principal was at a school where they were not in a position to absorb the lost post.

1.7 Outline of the Research

The first chapter gives an overview of the proposed study, including a historical perspective on the need to change the face of education so radically after 1994. It also gives a brief account of the approach education authorities take to the provision of educators at an educational institution. Next, the research questions and the aims of the research are provided. Finally, there is a brief description of the approach used in the research and the informants involved in the study.

Chapter Two focuses on the relevant literature on staff provisioning and the redeployment of redundant staff at an institution. This literature helped to define and shape the research reported in this thesis.

Chapter Three provides a full description of the research design and a detailed account of the procedure followed. In other words, it describes how the sample group was selected, the steps that were followed to collect the data, the reasons for using a particular method of analysis, and the basis of the conclusions that were reached.

Research is a discipline that is strongly influenced and guided by ethical principles that a researcher cannot, and may not, ignore. Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 101) say that “most ethical issues in research fall into one of four categories: protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues”. Ethical issues related to the research are also discussed in this chapter.

In Chapter Four, the empirical data are discussed and the interpretation of the findings is explained.

Finally, Chapter Five sheds some light on how schools can absorb the impact of teacher redeployment with the least effect on the schools community. In addition, it suggests ways in which educators who are declared in excess can place

themselves in a better position to handle this very stressful situation. Essentially, the focus falls on the need to do the best for the school rather than engage in power games.

The next chapter reviews the work of researchers and authors who have done studies related to rightsizing and redeployment. My aim is to give the readers a better understanding of the central issues.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERARY REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In an article about the seven causes of stress, Hart (2007) lists work related stress as the second highest cause of stress in people:

How is the workplace a cause of stress? We worry about getting and keeping adequate employment. We worry about new types of work or new responsibilities. We struggle to climb a career ladder, overwhelmed by the demands.

Where change is linked to the possibility and likelihood of a person's source of livelihood being taken away or his/her sense of security (his/her job) threatened and it exacerbates the level of stress experienced by the individual. Hyman et al. (2002: 183) notes that "organisational change may be seen as a normal consequence of survival and development in a rapidly changing world. In many situations this change can involve organisational downsizing". This downsizing can ultimately affect a person's sense of security and be a catalyst for the development of further stress in a person's life. According to Redman and Keithly (1998),

downsizing remains one of the most understudied aspects of business life. In those few accounts that even recognize the existence of downsizing; the focus is usually a discussion of how to avoid the legal pitfalls or simple attempts to quantify its extent. Much rarer is any discussion that examines the drivers, process and impact of downsizing.

This research seeks to explore the elements of downsizing (in our South African context, rightsizing) which affect teachers. Though the intention of rightsizing was to redistribute them to areas where their services were needed, not to dismiss them, it had unintended consequences. Teachers opted to take the VSP or to resign because they felt rightsizing was to their detriment. In particular, teachers feared that redeployment could ultimately lead to the breakdown of their family units. If, for example, a teacher were to be redeployed, his/her spouse would either have to resign his/her job or the family would have to split up and live in different places. Others felt that they were not willing to live with the concomitant job insecurity or need to adapt to a new school environment.

In this chapter I will also discuss relevant concepts in motivational theories. These concepts will be used to help explain the unintended consequences that being declared in excess and subsequent redeployment have on teachers, in particular why in most cases their morale and performance levels are so deleteriously affected.

2.2 Aims of this chapter

Studies by Maile (2005), Chisholm, Soudien, Vally and Gilmore (1999), Gilmore (2001) and Soudien (2001) highlight various aspects of the rightsizing and redeployment process. Of these, I found the research done by Maile (2005) particularly useful for my purposes. His study explores the mass redeployment and exodus of teachers that happened just after the redeployment process that was set in motion by the Education Department. He also looks at the implications of the redeployment process on the schools that were affected by it. Soudien (2001) is also directly useful because it explores the impact on teachers at the then House of Representative (Coloured) schools. In this chapter I explore the possible effects that redeployment and job insecurity on teachers' performance levels so I can determine whether the effect on teachers today is the same way as it was then. I pay particular attention to the neo-liberal influences that informed the decisions to reshape the South African education landscape after 1994, as well as the emotional impact and the effect on the work performance of teachers.

Various legislative developments had to take place before teacher redeployment could begin. I therefore outline the main legislative changes that laid the foundation of the redeployment process.

2.3 Clarifying the concepts of rightsizing and redeployment and what it entails.

Rightsizing and redeployment are management tools and strategies originally used in the business sector. However, in recent years the public sector organisations have adopted these tools and strategies to streamline their operational activities. As Wagar and Rondeau (2000:ii) point out:

Today downsizing (rightsizing) has not only come to represent an enduring management response to declining markets, products, and budgets, but is often used as a means to invigorate a flagging enterprise in its quest to become 'lean and mean'.

The literature uses a number of synonyms for these concepts: "downsizing, building down, demassing, leaning-up, redeployment, resizing, reduction in force, streamlining" (Wagar and Rondue 2000:ii) and "de-recruiting, de-massing, re-engineering, re-sizing, restructuring and reorganisation" (Thornhill & Saunders 1997:271). One should note that most of these synonyms are used to describe what is currently happening at school level.

I want to emphasise that the ongoing process of rightsizing in the education sector affects schools every year. Educator provision to schools in South Africa is closely linked to the number of learners enrolled at the institution. If the learner numbers increase, then the school stands to gain additional educator posts. If, however, the number drops, then schools stand to lose a number of posts. This is what tends to happen at under-resourced schools in under privileged areas when parents exercise their right to choose where they want to enrol their children.

As I noted earlier, redeployment in education was not designed to force teachers out of the system, but rather to move them to other schools so that a more equitable distribution of teachers could be achieved. Rightsizing (downsizing) is "a set of activities undertaken on the part of management and designed to improve organisational efficiency, productivity and/or competitiveness" (Wagar et al., 2000:ii). Although improvement of organisational efficiency was the main goal, one cannot ignore the fact that neo-liberal goals of fiscal discipline and saving on expenses, including education, played a role when the decisions on rightsizing were taken. Education takes a large slice of the budget in both National and Provincial levels of government, with expenses on teacher remuneration getting the biggest cut. Redeployment, therefore, aimed at saving money and at re-organising operational activities so that the allocated budget can be used more efficiently. As Der Kinderen and Greef (2003:86) explain:

[D]uring the period of May 1996 to 1998 the South African Department of Education began its process of bringing about equity in the education system and attending to budgetary

problems by redeploying teachers to areas where they were most needed.

In most cases teachers were redeployed to the under-resourced rural schools. Whilst its overall intentions are admirable, the process of rightsizing has some unintended consequences and can disrupt education and schools. One unintended consequence is that teachers who do not want to be redeployed can so easily be lost to the profession if they choose to resign. Likely disruptions at the schools result from having to redistribute the workload, setting up new time tables, and declining staff morale.

It should be noted that rightsizing or redeployment are not concepts and strategies that are uniquely South African. They are also not tools that are exclusively used in the education sector, but across the spectrum of private and public sectors, as “[v]irtually every sector has caught the downsizing fever” (Cameron, 1994:190). These strategies and tools are employed on a global scale in all private and public spheres. Some of the areas and countries where they have already been used to some degree include Japan and America (Mroczkowski & Hanaoka, 1997). In fact, countries all over the world have done rightsizing and redeployment at some stage in the public and private sectors. Even organisations like the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organisation (Naiman, 2000), Nursing (Johnson et al., 2008) and hospitals (Hyman, Watson & Munro, 2002) have not been spared this fate.

2.4 Legislative enactments

In the following paragraphs I will be referring to circulars and minutes. The discussion will briefly clarify the difference between a circular and a minute in the WCED context.

As stated on the WCED webpage (<http://wced.wcape.gov.za/circulars/index-circmins.html>) “Circulars inform the WCED as a whole of policy matters. Minutes inform specific components of specialised matters”. Circulars give a very brief synopsis of specific policy intentions and inform the reader (educators and managers) of the procedures that must be followed in the WCED schools to implement such policy. The circulars are to a large extent policy clarification and

steps that the WCED expect to be taken to implement such policies. Minutes deals with issues of common agreement between employer, labour and the ELRC which is not in policy form, but which must be implemented in schools. Minutes are therefore the steps that the WCED expect schools and area office to follow in order to streamline operational activities. Circular 6/2010 provides further clarity:

[I]t is important to distinguish between the purpose of a circular and that of a minute. Circulars are issued to inform WCED personnel regarding matters of particular importance, i.e. policy matters which cannot be arbitrarily amended or ignored. Minutes are used by Chief Directorates, District Offices and Directorates to provide information, instructions or clarity on routine matters.

Some of the circulars, minutes and reports that inform regarding the rightsizing and redeployment process include, but are not limited to Circular 31/2009, which sets out the provision of educators as related to the issuing of staff establishments for 2010, and Circular 74/2002, which deals with the transfer of CS educators within the WCED.

The WCED Annual Report 2008/9 states:

[T]he matching and placement of additional employees into vacant substantive posts is an ongoing process and is guided by the applicable collective agreements. In a further effort to promote the redeployment of additional employees, vacant posts are also regularly advertised in departmental vacancy lists.

Human Capital Minute 8/2009 stipulates the criteria to be used by the WCED in the allocation of, and procedures to be followed by schools to apply for, growth posts. The term 'growth post' refers to a post which schools can apply for should the learner totals increase to such an extent that it justifies the employment of additional staff members. Schools cannot just unilaterally appoint teachers in such cases. They have to apply to the WCED citing statistics to support their application. The WCED can either approve or deny such a request.

Various laws within the South African Educational context have led to agreements between government and educator unions which made the redeployment process possible. In some cases previous agreements reached informed the laws that were written. These laws include: The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998:

[This] gives the Minister of Education certain powers in terms of the structuring of the Education Department including the employment of educators and the structuring and restructuring of the Education Department. This act was enacted to provide for the employment of educators by the State, for the regulation of the conditions of service, discipline, retirement and discharge of educators and for matters connected therewith. (Act 76 of 1998)

- The National Norms and Standards for School Funding (Government Gazette No 19347, dated 12 October 1998) contains in section 2 (31 to 34) provisions deal with the provision of educators personnel to schools.
- ELRC Collective Agreement 2/2003 deals with the Transfer of Serving Educators in Terms of Operational Requirements.
- The Personnel Administrative Measurements (PAM) (amended 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003) was one of the legislative document used to plot the way in which the redeployment process would be implemented.

A formal agreement was reached with the Unions in this regard in 2002 which culminated in Resolution 7 of 2002. This resolution, which was signed in Pretoria on 6 March 2002 by the state (employer) and the unions (DENOSA, NEHAWU, PAWUSA, POPCRU, SADTU and SAPU) which represented teachers, was the outcome of the agreements reached to govern the process of identifying and redeploying teachers. It was intended to protect not only the interest of the state in terms of its aims to redistribute its human resources more equitably, but also the rights of union members affected by the redeployment process.

The Department of Education felt that it had sufficient human resources to fulfil its needs, but they were not distributed optimally. When the learner-teacher ratio that had been inherited from the pre-1994 education departments was taken into account, most of the former White and Coloured schools had an excess of teachers whilst former Black schools were understaffed. Resolution 7 of 2002 was implemented to address these issues. Previous attempts to address this issue were not very successful and it was envisaged that this resolution would address these problems. It lists the objectives and principles of the agreement as follows:

Subsection (a) aims to develop a framework for transformation and restructuring of the public service in order to give effect to the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC)

Resolutions 7, 9 and 10 of 2001; subsection (b) provides for redeployment, retraining and alternative employment of excess employees.

Section 8 of the resolution lays down the procedures to be followed when excess staff members are to be redeployed. It spells out the general rules applicable to redeployment as follows:

- (b) *All employees affected by transformation and restructuring process must be-*
 - (i) *treated fairly and in terms of relevant legislation and collective agreements; and*
 - (ii) *informed of the process to be followed in attempting to suitably accommodate them in the public service and any other sphere of government.*
- (c) *The employee may make representations on his or her own behalf or be assisted by a representative.*
- (d) *The employer must duly consider the representations made by the employee and/or his or her representative before making a final decision.*
- (e) *An excess employee may only be appointed in a post at a level equivalent to his or her post immediately before he or she became in excess.*
- (f) *The employer must apply measures to facilitate and enhance redeployment, which includes:*
 - (i) *provide training for excess employees to meet the requirements of vacant posts;*
 - (ii) *allow employees to retire early;*
 - (iii) *where appropriate, approve applications for a severance package to excess employees who apply for that package as provided for in clauses 8.2(b), 8.3(b) and 9.2(a); and*
 - (iv) *fill existing vacant and funded posts.*
- (g) *Excess employees must participate in the redeployment and retraining process.*
- (h) *Subject to due processes, including being offered the opportunity to make representations, employees who unreasonably refuse to be redeployed will be deemed to have resigned.*

Maile (2005:117) explains:

Redeployment does not involve layoffs or other forms of attrition of personnel. It simply involves a freeze on hiring and a transfer of excess educators from one educational institution to another ... down-sizing is a management manoeuvre undertaken either pro-actively, in anticipation of educational demands, or reactively, in the face of any of the following: changes in learner enrolment; curriculum changes

within a specific educational institution; changes in the grading of a specific educational institution, or financial constraints.

The Personnel Administrative Measure (PAM) document in Section B, subsection 2.4a makes provision for the redeployment of educators under exactly those conditions viz:

- (a) *Operational requirements for educational institutions are based on, but not limited to the following:*
 - (i) *change in pupil enrolment*
 - (ii) *curriculum changes within a specified educational institution*
 - (iii) *change to the grading of the specific educational institution*
 - (iv) *financial restraints.*

One can see from the above that the Education Department is given certain powers to re-assess its operational needs on an ongoing basis and to make whatever changes is needed to streamline the system. It is exactly for this reason that the rightsizing process is still ongoing and will still be done in future. The education department re-evaluates the distribution of learners at state schools by means of the tenth day enrolment on CEMIS. It then adjusts its staff provisioning for schools based on these statistics. This results in fluctuations in the annual staff provisioning for schools.

2.5 Neo-Liberal influences on teacher redeployment

“A weighty question for policymakers everywhere is how to achieve the right balance between public and private resources in the provision of primary and secondary education.” (Fiske & Ladd, 2005:130) This is a question that weighed heavily on the policymakers who were faced with reorganising education for a post-Apartheid era. The government aimed to right the imbalances caused by the apartheid government’s education funding policy. Lemon (2004:269) explains that in 1994 the ANC-led government inherited a racially divided and discriminatory education system to which the National Party had, in its early 1990 reforms, added elements of a market driven system. In essence, this is a neo-liberal approach to the problems experienced by the education sector.

The following discussion will briefly clarify neoliberalism and its meaning. Neoliberalist policies were derived from the liberal views on economics.

Liberalism prevailed in the United States during the 1800's and 1900's. In terms of this policy, economics had to be free from government intervention or restrictions on manufacturing, no barriers to commerce, and no tariffs – to be 'liberal' in the sense of no control. (Martinez et al. 1996).

Thorsen et al. (2000) refer to "a revival of liberalism" They suggest that the concept of liberalism, a political ideology, was dormant for some time, but in the last twenty years it has been revived and has new rigour and meaning, hence a new (neo) form of liberalism. Thorsen et al. quote from David Harvey (2005) to explain the theory:

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-beings can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices.

Neoliberalism can be seen to support the idea that state intervention should be minimal.

Privatization is one of the key concepts embraced by neo-liberalism. Governments are increasingly selling off state-owned enterprises, goods and services to private investors. This includes banks, key industries, railroads, electricity, water, school and hospitals. Sometimes the poor suffer as more and more wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few and the public have to pay more to meet their basic needs. Grant and Naidoo (2004:100) argue that "greater local participation serves the two main thrusts of the neo-liberal agenda ... the promotion of 'good governance' and the shrinking of the state and the expansion of private sector activity".

Carolyn Basset (2008:2) argues that "lower government spending, balanced budgets and accelerated debt payments were at the core of the neo-liberal program". These were concepts that the South African post-Apartheid government latched onto vigorously. In many cases this stance of government was to the detriment of its relationship with its liberation struggle partners, i.e. COSATU and the SACP.

Certain constraints hampered the change the South African government envisaged. One was the portion of the budget allocated to education: "Some 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and approximately 21% of the national budget (was allocated to education). A sum of approximately R65 billion (US\$ 6 billion) was allocated to education in 2003" (Soudien, 2007). South Africa spends more money per capita on education than any other country with a comparable budget. The biggest portion of the education budget is spent on staff remuneration and a fraction of this on physical resources. This is a situation that for obvious reasons cannot be maintained indefinitely.

Lemon (2004: 269) argues that "as a result of this, national policies since 1994 have been rich in the political symbolism of equity and redress, but in practice was characterised by acceptance of co-modification and choice". Jonathan Jansen (2002) makes a similar point when he refers to "political symbolism" to describe the government's adoption of policies without due consideration of whether it had the capacity to sustain or enforce them. I agree with both Lemon and Jansen in this regard. The ANC-led government had to prove to the people who voted it into power that it was serious about changing a system that had been regarded by most of the citizens as discriminatory. People at grassroots level wanted to see and experience some tangible changes in South Africa. A lot of the changes implemented, even in education, had been reached as a compromise between government, unions, other political parties and stakeholders who felt that the old education system had a number of elements that was good, but a great deal of it was perceived to be part of the instruments of oppression. Although the government was determined to make sweeping changes, it was unable to do so because of financial constraints and its commitment to fiscal discipline. In many cases it also lacked the capacity to follow through on policies. Jansen (2002)

As a liberation movement, the ANC had put great pressure on the National Party government. Most of their demands were in line with the Freedom Charter and were socialist. When it came into power, the ANC-led government had no option but to make compromises in order to take account of the demands of other stakeholders such as other political parties, groups involved in the liberation struggle, and business representatives.

During the years of the liberation struggle the ANC used the Freedom Charter, which was adopted in Kliptown on 25 June 1955, as the basis for their demands to be implemented in a democratic South Africa. This Charter's list of the basic rights of individuals and groups includes the right to education: "Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children" (Freedom Charter 1955). However, the ANC government had to adapt their "free education" stance and make provision for schools to charge school fees in order to reduce the financial burden on the state. This practice is in line with neo-liberal practices for state departments to shift some of its social responsibilities to the people.

The main reason the government had to renege on their campaign promises was that it was under pressure from groups within and outside the borders like those involved in the multi-party talks, other governments, world economist, World Bank, United Nations, International Monetary Fund, etc. to implement a balanced and responsible form of governance and state spending. Meyer (2000) states that "the African National Congress displays a fundamental paradigm shift in terms of its original economic policy...(and) depicts an eventful retreat from strong socialist principles embedded in the Freedom Charter to compromise towards a mixed economy". Neo-liberal influences played a major role in the direction that the government eventually took in terms of its policies and spending.

Fiscal policy has been central to the neo-liberal project, with most restructuring programs insisting that government spending be cut and its priorities change. In South Africa, the situation was slightly different, because when the country finally achieved majority rule in 1994, the country was in the advantageous position of holding relatively little debt, even less of it foreign, and thus was not forced to adopt neo-liberal restructuring through a donor-devised structural adjustment program. Nonetheless, the new government embraced most of the same neo-liberal policies, with little immediate concern for the impact on the poor. Indeed, in 1993, just a year before they formed the government, the ANC voluntarily co-signed (with the NP government) an IMF loan agreement that incorporated stringent fiscal policy conditions: reducing the budget deficit to six percent of Gross Domestic Product, containing expenditures to avoid increasing taxes, keeping the civil service wage bill under control, and foregoing 'excessive' social spending" (Bassett: 2008:4).

Fiscal discipline was therefore at the order of the day. As education spending is one of the bigger expenses, it was thus inevitable that this would be an area that would be affected most by budgetary cuts.

Meyer (2000) contest that “the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) perceives liberalization and neo-liberalism as a panacea for the ills of the economy, public sector and accelerated socio-economic service delivery”. Although education is one of the social responsibilities that government could not sidestep, it had to implement some degree of fiscal discipline in its spending on it. The state identified a need to supply more teachers to understaffed schools, but was unable to increase its spending on education. The solution was to redistribute teachers from overstaffed to understaffed schools.

When non-racial democracy was introduced in 1994, fiscal policy pursued three main objectives: to produce an annual surplus in order to pay down the country’s accumulated debt; to cut corporate taxes; and to deracialize public spending. The first two priorities continued the neo-liberal approach of the previous government, while the third was a reaction to the racist programs of apartheid. (Bassett 2008:4-5)

Deracializing public spending was achieved by specifying Norms and Standards (Act 84 of 1998) for funding which was implemented by government. Public institutions like schools received funds calculated according to a sliding scale. Poor, under-resourced institutions received most of this. The more privileged schools then had to boost their coffers through private funding (donations) and the collection of school fees.

Neo-liberal policies seek to decentralise control of public services like education and put it into the hands of the parents and community who must be accountable for the running of such institutions. A limited budget is allocated out of state funds and parents and the school have to generate the shortfall.

In the case of public education, this vision has worked toward creating a competitive market driven system based on privatization schemes and a test driven instrumental curriculum. Much of the discourse surrounding these bold initiatives paints them as broad egalitarian and democratic steps for ‘fixing’ a ‘broken’ and ‘corrupt’ system incapable of preparing youth for the challenges of ... post-industrial future”. (Means, 2008).

The proponents of the neo-liberal policy claim that the system will create a more competitive market driven education system that will benefit all learners and educators in the sector. Schools have the freedom to market themselves in order to attract the best pupils and teachers. Parents have choice in where they want their children to attend school and those who can afford it normally opt for the best that their money can buy. A negative consequence of this free-market system is that the choice is however very limited for parents who do not have the money to place their children at these elitists' schools.

The South African government decided to introduce the payment of school fees in spite of the ANC's pre-election promises of free education for all. A variety of reasons has led to this decision including "limited public resources and pressure for local control over education." (Fiske & Ladd, 2005: 131) The state realised that it cannot address all the needs with its limited financial resources, but that it had to do this in partnership with the different communities. The neo-liberal view that the running of state institutions should be a public – government initiative has taken effect. "The government has opted for a two-pronged approach to change: (a) a fundamental transformation of public service over a two- to three-year period to reshape apartheid institutions; and (b) a broader, longer-term and ongoing process of administrative reform" (Therkildsen, 2001:2). The 'longer-term and ongoing process of administrative reform' can be seen in the ongoing rightsizing and redeployment of teachers in the education system.

The neo-liberal approach had the unintentional consequences that the number of teachers was dramatically reduced. One must bear in mind that the biggest cost the education department budget was the salaries of teaching staff: "In recent years, personnel expenditure has increased as a proportion of total expenditure by the (Provincial Education Departments) PEDs. In 1998/99, the national average of personnel to total costs in PED budgets is 90 per cent" (Norms and Standards for School Funding: 1998. The implication of this was that only about 10% of the annual budget was available for PEDs to spend on non-salary expenditure. One can understand that this is a situation which is not sustainable over an extended period of time. It is for this reason that the Norms and Standards for School Funding (1998) suggest that "as a policy target, based on both local and international evidence, the Ministry of Education has determined that personnel: non-personnel

spending in ordinary public schools should be of the order of 80:20". The target is that a maximum of 80% of the budget is to be spent on teacher salaries and at least 20% on non-salary expenditure. The number of teachers in the system is kept to a minimum that can be allowed within the constraints of the budget, and therefore we find the ongoing process of rightsizing and educators being declared in excess.

Fee paying schools have, however, led to "the way in which students sort themselves among schools, with class beginning to replace race as the primary determinant of who is able to gain access to the formerly white schools" (Fiske & Ladd, 2005:131) Such schools can afford to increase their school fees to add to what the state provides and thus acquire the best possible resources – including hiring additional staff members. This keeps the teacher-learner ratio at such schools well below the state established ratio of 38 to 1 for primary schools or 35 to 1 for secondary schools.

This is exactly what neo-liberalism advocates and places schools in the position to compete for the best learners, parents and teachers for the school. However, some people are excluded from such institutions because they cannot afford the required school fees. Although schools in this category do offer bursaries and study grants to learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, regardless of race or class, the number of these is limited.

2.6 Teachers in excess and their redeployment

Redeployment as a tool had various aims to achieve. It firstly had to redistribute teachers who were at schools with a more advantageous learner-teacher ratio to schools where there was overcrowding. Secondly, it had to serve as a strategy employed by the post 1994 government to relieve some of the financial burden placed on it. Redistributing the available teachers within the system would mean that government would not be burdened with employing additional teachers to bring the large learner-teacher ratios down. Soudien (2001:34) draws attention to the fact that in pre-1994 South Africa "ratios as low as 20:1 had been achieved (in white schools), while (in African schools) they had escalated, in particular places to highs

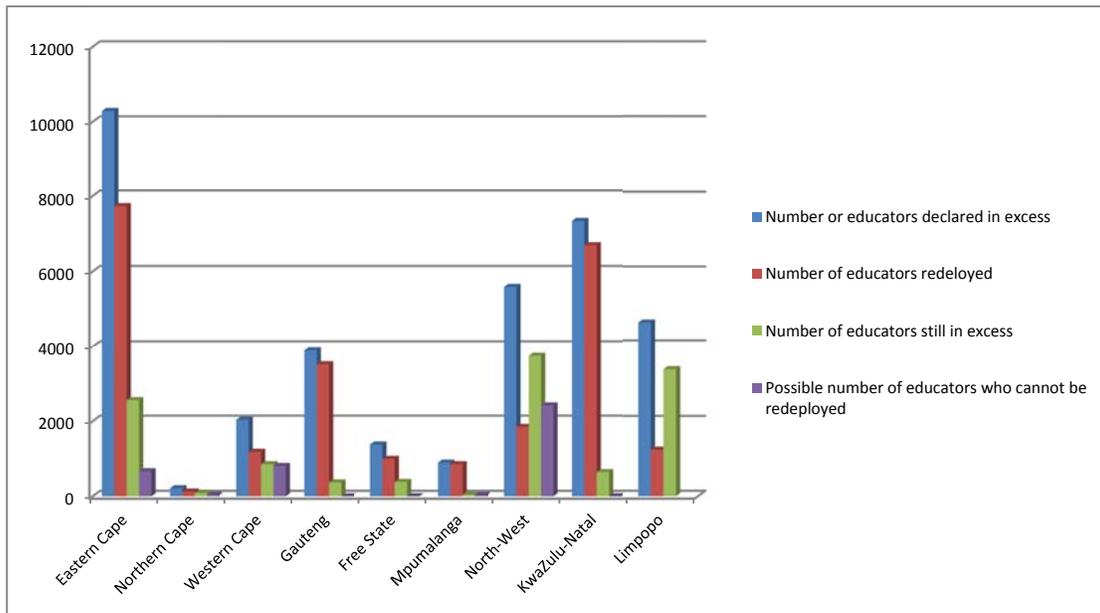
of 80:1". In the late 1990's to early 2000s the redeployment process was implemented in earnest to address this particular problem.

The following table by Maile (2005:174) illustrates the extent on a provincial basis:

Province	Total number of educator posts created by MEC	Number of educators declared in excess	Number of educators redeployed	Number of educators still in excess	Number of vacant posts	Possible number of educators who cannot be redeployed
Eastern Cape	68863	10289	7730	2559	2942	666
Northern Cape	6963	214	125	89	307	39
Western Cape	25629	2038	1184	854	1036	805
Gauteng	46917	3885	3516	369	4000	0
Free State	23945	1377	995	382	329	0
Mpumalanga	26535	896	852	44	1412	33
North-West	28527	5589	1847	3742	1324	2418
KwaZulu-Natal	68742	7338	6694	644	1000	0
Limpopo	51861	4623	1243	3380	5166	Not available
Total	347982	36249	24186	12063	17516	3961

Table 1: Statistical information on rationalisation and redeployment as at 30 September 2000. (Maile 2005:174)

The following graph illustrates some of the above data in a more visual way.



Graph 1: Graphical representation of educators in excess, educators redeployed, educators still in excess and possible number who cannot be redeployed.

I selected some of the data from a table in Maile (2005) to calculate and illustrate the percentage of teachers in excess who could not be redeployed for various reasons.

Province	Number or educators declared in excess	Possible number of educators who cannot be redeployed	Percentage of educators who cannot be redeployed
Eastern Cape	10289	666	6.5%
Northern Cape	214	39	18.2%
Western Cape	2038	805	39.5%
Gauteng	3885	0	0%
Free State	1377	0	0%
Mpumalanga	896	33	3.7%
North-West	5589	2418	43.3%
KwaZulu-Natal	7338	0	0%
Limpopo	4623	unknown	

Table 2: Statistical calculation of percentage of teachers who could not be redeployed as at 30 September 2000

The Western Cape was one of the provinces where just over 2000 teachers were declared in excess in this period. At the end of the process in September 2000, it had the second highest number of teachers (39.5%) who could not be redeployed. Only the North West Province had more, with 43.3% of its teachers in excess that could not be redeployed. This is a clear indication of the extent of the problems experienced as a result of redeployment in the province.

Soudien (2001:34) says that in the early stages of the redeployment process,

staff identified as being in excess was given the option of applying for a severance package or of being redeployed elsewhere in the country. In terms of this 5923 teachers applied for and were given severance packages in the Western Cape Province in 1996. 1200 applied to be and were redeployed to more poverty stricken areas.

As Maile (2005) points out, if the number of teachers in the system at the time who had accepted the Voluntary Severance Package (5923) is considered as a percentage of the number of posts created in the Western Cape (25 629), one arrives at an answer of 23%.

$$\frac{\text{VSP}}{\text{Posts created}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

$$\frac{5923}{25629} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

23.10%

A large portion of expertise was thus lost to the public education system. A number of these teachers were absorbed into posts created by School Governing Bodies but the majority of them decided to leave the system.

Soudien's (2001) study focuses on the impact of the restructuring process for schools in the previous House of Representatives (Coloured) group. Maile (2005) had a different focus. This study looked at the redeployment issue from the perspective of the redeployed educator. This is an angle that I take in my study. Maile's focus was more on the procedural fairness of the process and the redeployed teachers' feelings towards their previous schools' principal and staff. However, he also deals incidentally with the issue of how the process affected the individual. My study hones in on this particular aspect of the redeployment process, in other words how it affects the individual on a personal and professional level.

"A target date of 2005 was set for the completion of the reform process" (Soudien 2001:22). Whilst the large scale redeployment of the late 1990s and early twenty first century has to a certain extent come to an end, it is important to note that "as a process, redeployment is ongoing and continuous" (Maile 2005:177). The mass exodus and redeployment of educators has come to a virtual stop, but it is now done on a much smaller, yet significant, scale. The fact remains that even on this

small scale, redeployment still has negative implications for the teachers identified and the schools involved.

2.7 The effects of being declared in excess on staff

When you ask someone who they are, they will, apart from saying their name, inevitably bring up what type of work they do during the course of the conversation. We perceive ourselves through the job that we do. I am ... a teacher / a lawyer / a plumber, etc. The job that we do is linked to our identity. Job loss or a mere threat to our sense of job security will have an effect on how we perceive ourselves. Other than our names, our jobs are often the next important thing that defines us. When choice is taken out of the equation and teachers are told to move against their will, it will have a greater negative impact.

Let us focus on identity for a brief moment. As Wenger (1998:145) so eloquently puts it, “focusing on identity, however, is not a change of topic but rather a shift of focus within the same general topic”. Identity shifts the focus to who we are in relation to the group. We do not exist as beings in isolation, but we are involved in a daily interaction with other people who at the end of the day shape us into the beings that we are. Moore (2005:175-176) puts it this way:

[N]o one should have any doubt that a person's identity is a critical definer of legal status and that the question of identity is ubiquitous, that it exists everywhere in the social environment, and that the identity issue is not only a matter of the roles of individuals, but of the categorization of groups.

This creates a sense of belonging is shaped through our interactions with other people who act as a mirror in which we can get a glimpse of who we are.

Allow me to use an example to illustrate this point. I know that I have studied for a number of years to become a teacher and have the certificates stored in a drawer somewhere. This gives me the necessary documents to prove to others that I am a teacher. However, these documents only come into play when I need to prove to others, perhaps a prospective employer, that I am a qualified teacher. However, it is my daily interactions with other teachers and my daily actions as a teacher that give me the sense of belonging to the global community of teachers. These interactions

with others who ply the same trade give me a sense of belonging, and therefore help to shape my professional identity.

[W]e do not have a single fixed identity. Rather, at different times and in different places, various aspects of our identities may be foregrounded depending on with whom we are interacting. In this sense, each person's identity is actually a hybrid of multiple dimensions of a self. Gomez and White (2010)

If this sense of identity and belonging, or the job security that it holds, is being threatened like in the case of rightsizing, it can lead to feelings of “loss, anxiety, anger, insecurity, mistrust and stress”. (Maile 2005:173)

Organisational change is unavoidable, especially in a country like South Africa which is trying to compete in the global society. Change is necessary to stay relevant in an ever-changing world. It is when change threatens people's sense of identity that it takes on a negative dimension. Global society is undergoing constant changes and countries reposition themselves on an ongoing basis to remain relevant in this ever-changing world. “Organisational change may be seen as a ‘normal’ consequence of survival and development in a rapidly changing world. In many situations this change can involve organisational downsizing” (Hyman, Watson and Munro: 2002). As Maurier and Nothcott as quoted by Hyman et al (2002) point out:

[S]everal studies have pointed to a direct link between job uncertainty and negative health effects. Other than this a person's self-esteem, self-worth and personal economic conditions may be affected. Job losses with long serving staff resembled that of bereavement with feelings of anticipatory grief; acute mourning; refusal to accept.

The American Institute on Stress reports on their website that there are many contributing factors to stress in the workplace. Some of these causes include:

[working] long hours, feeling that you are being treated unfairly, not having any acknowledgement or reward for a job well done, and most importantly, increased demands but having little control or decision making latitude of your work activities. A lack of job security is also cited as one of the major causes of stress in the workplace and has been a growing problem due to more downsizing, hostile takeovers and mergers. (American Institute of Stress 2008)

Oliver et al. (2003:186) ranks teaching as one of the more stressful occupations. He explains that people who form part of the helping professions (which includes teachers), are particularly prone to stress because of their idealistic goals. Such stress can cause “job compassion fatigue” ... (which) involves a subtle but progressive erosion of behaviour, attitude, health and spirit that eventually inhibits an individual’s ability to function effectively at work. It involves emotional exhaustion, depression and diminished personal accomplishment accompanied by frustration and strain. (Oliver et al., 2003: 187). An American study found that threatened job loss is accompanied by a number of traditional stages, involving disbelief, sense of betrayal, confusion, anger and ultimately, resolution. This is very similar to the stages of bereavement that an individual will go through when losing a loved one through death.

Whilst change can be good for streamlining operational requirements, the process, which may include downsizing and the redistribution of resources (both human and physical), can be very “clinical in terms of a ‘rational’ calculation of the benefits and cost to the organisation as a whole” (Hyman et al., 2002: 184). In terms of the rationalisation and redistribution of teachers, one can understand why the teacher can be seen as just a number or a name on a piece of paper that is dealt with in a very clinical manner. I think that principals are in a way forced to deal with the matter of rightsizing in such a clinical manner because they are constantly reminded about that fact that ‘procedural fairness’ should prevail. Whilst ensuring that the process is fair in every way possible towards the people affected, it can easily make the principal feel detached and in the process they forget that they are actually working with human beings who have feelings and emotions. Principals then adopt what Heystek et al. (2008) refer to as a “hard approach” to the management of the process. The teachers are then seen as and treated like a resource and the human aspect of the person is not taken into consideration. Teachers who are affected by the process see such principals as unsympathetic, detached and even cruel.

2.8 What is job insecurity?

In his article, Pienaar (2007) states that job insecurity “generally... refers to individuals’ subjective experience that the job itself, or important features thereof, are under threat”. Furthermore,

important consequences of the phenomenon have been found in terms of employee physical and psychological health, as well as organisational performance indicators such as absenteeism and productivity. The sense that one’s job or certain aspects thereof is either under threat of being lost or changed beyond your control can be contributing factors to a sense of job insecurity. Job insecurity can lead to heightened levels of stress and a decline in the morale of staff members.

Burchell, Lapido and Wilkinson (2002) argue that:

there was also an emerging understanding that job insecurity was not only unpleasant for individuals, in terms of their psychological well-being, but that it raised serious problems for family stability and for organisational efficiency by lowering the commitment and motivation of employees.

In this thesis job insecurity will be interpreted as the fear of individuals to either lose their jobs or to be redeployed to another school. In other words their feeling of being secure in the post at their respective schools is under threat. Apart from the stress brought about by job loss, workplace change can also bring about debilitating anxieties. These anxieties include fitting in with a new staff, working with a new principal and senior management team and a new environment with its community and learners. Job insecurity brought about by the rightsizing and redeployment of teachers lead to a sense of a loss of control by the individual. In turn this heightens the levels of stress experienced by the individual. One could see that the respondents experiences led to heightened degree of job insecurity and stress. This in turn had some negative consequences, not only in their professional conduct, but also in their personal lives.

2.9 Teacher’s redeployment and their motivation level

Teachers in general are so overburdened with teaching responsibilities, administrative tasks, as well as maintaining learner discipline, and ensuring that

learner performance is at an acceptable level. These are contributing factors to an already low morale. It therefore does not take much for such a person's level of motivation to be dented. The ongoing rightsizing and redeployment process can in many cases be the proverbial straw that breaks the camel's back. Rightsizing and redeployment do not only lead to a decline in motivation of the person identified to be in excess, but also of the staff members who are left behind at the school after the process has been completed. Nobody at a school that has to implement rightsizing is left unscathed by the process. Even those teachers who are unaffected by the process (teachers not identified in excess) feel affected in some way by the process.

The term motivation is derived from the Latin verb *movere* which means "to set in motion" Van der Westhuizen (1991:194). This implies that a person either motivates him/herself or others to move in a certain direction. Heystek et al. (2008:79) describe motivation as "a force that energises behaviour and underlies the tendencies to persist, even in the face of obstacles". They further classify motivation as either being internal or external. Internal motivators would be those things from within that are the driving force behind a person's decision to persist. Examples of this would be an internal drive to help children or support parents to help their children. External motivators are the things (sometimes rewards) that can persuade a person to be sufficiently motivated to do the things that must be done. Examples of external motivators can be salaries, bonuses, better working conditions, etc. Motivational theories can help us to understand why teachers who are declared in excess and face redeployment, experience the process in so many ways and with different degrees of intensity. For some teachers being declared in excess can mean a new beginning, a chance to start on a clean slate. In other words this could be an external motivator to get the teachers out of a rut and present the person with new challenges. Others experience it as the death knell to their careers and a possible threat to their family life and social standing.

As was mentioned earlier, when a person's job and sense of security is threatened, it can have an adverse effect on the person's sense of identity. A teacher for example could have built up a certain identity, which can include a reputation as (for example a good, dedicated or trustworthy) teacher. S/he will have a certain rapport

with her/his colleagues. Removing a person from a secure environment against his/her will ultimately impact on his/her motivation and identity.

Various motivational theories can be used to illustrate and describe why teachers who experience redeployment may experience a certain set of emotions and feelings. Some of these theories discussed by Heystek et al. (2008:79-83) include Maslow's hierarchy of needs which says that a person's lower level needs must be satisfied before s/he can move to the next level. Teachers who face redeployment ultimately feel that their sense of security is being eroded. Maslow's theory "depends on the principle that the lowest and most basic needs must first be realised before a person can move to the next and higher levels of motivation" (Heystek et al. 2008:79). This implies that needs are satisfied and realised in an upward fashion. Any impact on one level will ultimately have a knock-on effect on the others. Aldefer's (existence, relatedness and growth) ERG theory simply states that if one need of a person cannot be fulfilled for whatever reason, that person will focus on their other needs. Again I feel that a threat to the one need will negatively impact on the other. If a teacher's means of existence, their job is for example threatened, the person might feel a sense of detachment from the rest of the staff members and his/her growth can be negatively impacted upon or even stunned. McClelland's emphasises of the needs of achievement, affiliation and power. The other theory that holds some interest for me is Herzbergs' two-factor theory of motivation. He identified, what he called, hygiene factors (salary, working conditions, etc.) as sources of work dissatisfaction and motivators to be sources of satisfaction. If hygiene factors are affected negatively, as in the case of a teacher being identified as being in excess, it may ultimately have a negative impact on the work performance of the person and their level of motivation.

2.10 Why do change initiatives fail?

There are a number of reasons why people would normally oppose efforts to implement change. One of these is that people inherently resist any attempts to shift them from their comfort zones. In his article about the reasons why civil service reforms fail, Charles Polidano (2001:346) says that "most reforms in government fail. They do not fail because, once implemented, they yield unsatisfactory

outcomes. They fail because they never get past the implementation stage at all. They are blocked outright or put into effect only in tokenistic, half-hearted fashion.” In South Africa, resistance to change prevented the noble aims of redeployment being realised. I want to take the reader back to Jansen’s (2002) statements that the South African landscape was rich in policy symbolism; the government in many cases lacked the capacity to effect the intended change.

The website www.businessperform.com lists some of the reasons for employee resistance to change as: belief that the change initiative is a temporary fad; belief that fellow employees or managers are incompetent; loss of authority or control; loss of status or social standing; lack of faith in their ability to learn new skills; feeling of change overload (too much too soon); lack of trust in or dislike of managers; loss of job security; loss of family or personal time; and feeling that the organization is not entitled to the extra effort

Educators who face the prospect of redeployment (and concomitant change) and the likely effects on them might employ some strategies to resist it. MacLane and Walmsley (2010: 65) list forms of behaviour that are typically employed by individuals to resist change. Some of them are passive forms of resistance (misuse of time and resources, misuse of information, poor attendance, poor quality work) while others are active forms of resistance (theft, destruction of property, unsafe behaviour, alcohol use, inappropriate verbal and physical actions) employed by staff. Examples of these forms of resistance can be seen in teachers who have been declared in excess and know they are to be redeployed.

Heystek et al. (2008: 31-32) note that change within an organisation can be identified and classified in terms of the individual, the group and their organisational levels. Resistance to change on any of these levels can thus hamper the initiatives to implement such changes. It is therefore important that stakeholders on all three levels must be part of the process if one expects the changes to be effectively accepted by all.

In Chapter Three I will give details of the research methods and methodologies that I employed during this research.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES

3.1 Introduction

Every researcher is faced with the dilemma of choosing the appropriate research methodology to adequately and reliably address the research problem. The method used to investigate the research problem and find plausible recommendations and, if possible, a solution to the problem is in essence the research design. The research design is fundamentally a roadmap used by the researchers to enable them to plot the way in which they want to investigate the research problem. "...researchers seek to explain, describe, explore and/or critique the phenomenon chosen for study." (Marshall & Rossman, 2006: 24)

In this research, methodologies will be used to create the lens to investigate the research problem. There are various research methodologies available and as researcher, I have to find the one that will be best suited to find answers to the research questions.

In the following chapter I will focus on what qualitative research is and the research design that I will ultimately decide on. Furthermore I will focus on why the qualitative method is best suited for this particular research topic. I will also be touching on the conceptual or theoretical framework that I choose for this study. I will then try to explain why this particular conceptual framework will work best to address the issues raised by the research questions.

The field work of the research will rely heavily on interviews. I will therefore also focus on the advantages and disadvantages of using interviews as a means of gathering data.

This study would not be complete and I would not be able to claim the legitimacy of the study, unless I stay focused on the ethical issues at play in this research. I will

explain at a later stage how I addressed the particular ethical issues that related to this research.

3.2 Research Design

As De Vaus (2001: 9) points out,

A research design is not just a work plan. A work plan details what has to be done to complete the project but the work plan will flow from the project's research design. The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible.

The lens actually refers to the research design that would give me the best possible way of investigating the research problem. The lens or research design that I chose to use when investigating the stated problems is qualitative phenomenological study. This is best suited my research because it enables the researcher to use a small sample of participants who can share their experiences of a particular phenomenon, like the rightsizing process, and shed some light on the problem under investigation.

Leedy and Ormond (2005:144) give some insight into the most common features of phenomenological design. When I looked at the purpose, focus, methods of data collection and analysis, I felt that by using this research design, I would be in a position to shed some light on the research questions. The columns below give summarise the key features:

Purpose	to understand an experience from the participants' point of view
Focus	A particular phenomenon as it is typically lived and perceived by human beings.
Methods of data collection	Interviews and any other relevant data sources
Method of data analysis	Search for "meaning units" that reflect various aspects of the experience. Integration of the meaning units into a typical experience

I investigated teachers' experience of the process of rightsizing. Teachers were given the opportunity to relay their individual experiences to me. I set out to

understand their experiences and how these have affected their behaviour, professional attitude and general wellbeing. It should be noted that when I enquire about how the process of being identified in excess have affected the participants' wellbeing or professionalism, I will focus on their own perceptions of how their general health and wellbeing was affected. The principals who will be interviewed will also be able to shed some light on this issue. They will know if these educators who were declared in excess have taken sick leave more frequently than before. Furthermore, these principals should also be in a position to say if there were any changes in the professional conduct of the teachers who were declared in excess. The question about any changes to the teachers' professional conduct would be evident from their involvement in school organisational activities or if there was any significant changes in the teachers' work ethics, involvement in school activities, their relationship with their colleagues or peers, etc. after being declared in excess.

3.3 Literature Supporting Evidence

It is important that a researcher keep abreast of research that was undertaken and which is currently being undertaken, which could shed some light on the researcher's own research questions and investigation. In order to do this I read papers, books and journal articles which have a direct or related bearing on the issue under investigation. Leedy and Ormond (2005:77) argue as follows:

in a good literary review, the researcher doesn't merely report the related literature. He or she also evaluates, organises and synthesises what others have done. Evaluating the literature would ultimately mean taking what literature about the topic is available and sifting through this information with the aim to select only those pieces of information that will ultimately add value to your research.

Organising the supporting evidence would entail taking the information that has been selected to add value to the research and putting it together so that it will form an integral and meaningful part of the research. Such information must be sorted, arranged and categorised to be meaningful. The next step is the difficult task of synthesising i.e. blending the literary information with the research to either support or strengthen the arguments and findings of this research.

The main mode of gathering data was through semi-structured interviews with the participants. Janesick (2004: 72) describes interviewing as "a meeting of two

persons to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic". By affording educators the opportunity to relate their stories during interviews, I hoped to gain some insight into the issues under investigation so I could be in a position to relate their narratives and draw some conclusions.

The interviews I used were semi-formal and mainly semi-structured. Although a structured approach would have meant less data to analyse, I decided to use the semi-structured method instead as I felt that teachers would find it less restrictive. I hope that the semi-structured format would allow teacher to relate their stories and experiences in a way that they felt comfortable. Another reason for not choosing a structured format was that it could lead to "a lack of flexibility to respond to emergent insights" (Maxwell, 2005: 80). At no point did I challenge the views or perceptions of the participants. I will merely tried to relate their account or version of their "lived experiences". "Respondents narrativize particular experiences in their lives, often where there has been a breach between ideal and real, self and society" (Kohler Riessman, 1993:3). In essence, I give an account of the participants' experiences of the phenomenon under investigation.

3.4 Qualitative Research Design

Miller (1997: 3) describes the qualitative phenomenology method of research as one of the "resources that researchers use in observing and making sense of aspects of social life". It encompasses various techniques including: "ethnography, case studies, field studies, grounded theories, interviews studies, etc." (Newman 1998: 9). This method of research is used to describe the meaning of phenomena to people. Maxwell (2005: 22-23) argues that this method would be best suited for:

- Understanding **meaning** of events...situations and experiences;
- Understanding **context**. How events, actions and meanings are shaped by the unique circumstances in which they occur;
- Identifying unanticipated **phenomena** and influences and generate new "grounded" theories;
- Understanding the **process** by which events and actions take place;
- Developing **casual explanations** of events as they occur in social context.

In my research I have set out to understand the meaning and context of the phenomenon under investigation and the processes of rightsizing as they were experienced by the teachers. My interviews and discussions with the respondents (teachers who were either at the receiving end of the process or principals who had to manage and implement it) helped me to get a better understanding of the phenomena.

Maxwell (2005; 3 – 5) suggests an interactive five component research design. The five components of his proposed research design includes: The Goals, Conceptual Framework, Research Questions, Methods and Validity. The interaction between these components can be illustrated as follows:

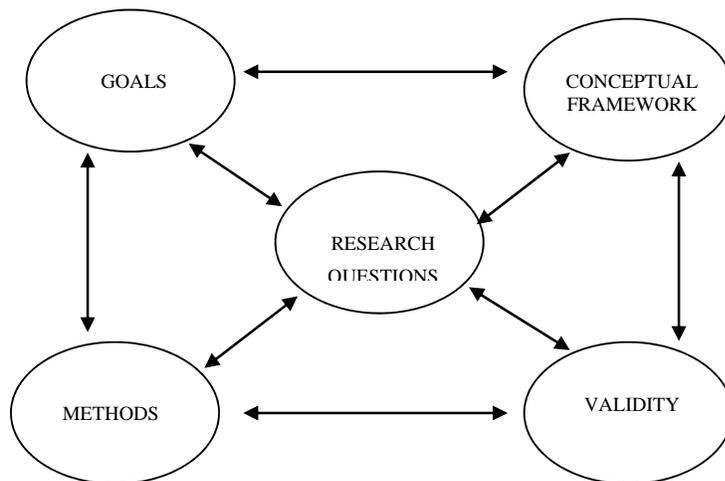


Figure 1.1: An Interactive Model of Research Design (Maxwell: 2005)

Maxwell (2005) notes that the advantage of this model is that its different components are in constant interaction with each other, unlike a linear or cyclical model where one has to go through a cycle before you can revisit a specific component. The research question is central to the Interactive Model of Research Design. This signifies the importance of having the research question central to all activities related to the research. If the researcher loses sight of the research question(s) that she/he wish to answer, then it could affect the research negatively.

The research design and method can make or break the research. Choosing the correct design helps to ensure a credible and valid research project which can withstand scrutiny by professionals in the field. This is also true in the investigation of the phenomenon of staff provisioning and its consequences on staff provisioning schools in the Cape Town area of the Western Cape.

3.5 Conceptual Framework

“A conceptual framework as a visual or written product, one that explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied—the key factors, concepts, or variables—and the presumed relationships among them” (Maxwell 2005)

I shall use this conceptual framework to describe how I approached my study of the phenomenon of rightsizing. I shall also explain what the main things are to be studied in the form of the research questions and what the presumed relationships are between them.

The main method of data collection was through interviews. The interviews were held with a number of teachers who had been redeployed in the past or who had been identified by their schools as being in excess and is awaiting redeployment. Two school principals who had gone through the process of rightsizing were also interviewed. Some of the teachers interviewed were from the two schools where the principals, who formed part of the study, were employed.

The data of the interviews were transcribed and the responses were clustered in one of the following groups:

(a) Teachers' responses

- (i) Background information on the respondents
- (ii) Teachers' experience of how the impending rightsizing at the school was communicated to them.
- (iii) How teachers feel being identified as being in excess at the school, and the redeployment affected them on a personal and professional level. Teachers will merely be communicating their feelings and perceptions of this matter.

- (iv) The level of support given, by the principal or education authorities, to those teachers identified as being in excess.

(b) Principals' responses

- (i) Criteria used to identify the teachers
- (ii) Procedures followed to do the rightsizing
- (iii) The impact on the teacher's professional abilities. The principals will relay their perceptions on this issue.

Clustering of the responses enabled me to make sense of the respondents' stories. Next I explored the 'meaning units' in the clusters that reflected various aspects of the experience" Leedy and Ormond (2005:144). Finding the meaning units in this study would ultimately mean being able to look at the experiences of the various participants, group them and describe and relate their account of the experience in a coherent manner. In cases where some of the respondents discussed issues relevant to this study that could not be clustered under one of the groups listed above, another was created.

3.6 The Research Sample

The research sample of a study refers to a group of people chosen that would in all probability be representative of a greater group of individuals who meet certain criteria. In other words it is a purposive sample of the group being studied who experience certain phenomena under investigation. The sample chosen must be trustworthy and the researcher must ensure that the conclusions drawn at the end of the study will be a fair representation. Such a sample can be critical in the trustworthiness of a study.

It is impossible for a researcher to study every single person who are experiencing the phenomena under investigation. For that reason, "...the researcher [does] ... not [usually] study the entire population of interest. Instead he or she will select a subset, or sample, of that population" (Leedy & Ormond, 1989: 210).

The research sample for my study consisted of a maximum of four teachers and two principals. I employed a purposeful convenience sampling which enabled me to “select those individuals or objects that [would] yield the most information about the topic under investigation”. (Leedy & Ormond, 2005:145). The persons selected were individuals who were identified as being in excess and were ranked as post level 1 (teacher), post level 2 (Head of Department / Education Specialist) or post level 3 (Deputy Principals) teachers. The teachers are individuals who had been declared in excess at a school and had been redeployed to another school or who were awaiting redeployment. A process of convenience sampling sufficed for the purpose of this study. I sourced these teachers from persons who met the above criteria and who agreed to form part of the study. My request for participants had a snowball effect. Teachers who heard about the study not only wanted to be part of it, but also offered the contact details of other teachers they knew who had been affected by redeployment. The main reasons why I chose to use a group of teachers who volunteered their participation in the study were the time constraints and the limited scope of this study. I also hoped that the participants would be more open to giving an honest and reliable account of their how they had experienced being declared in excess and / or being redeployed.

I recognised the danger that teachers with a grudge who wanted to settle a score with their principals (current or past) might volunteer to participate in the study so I was alert to this possibility when I did the interviews. As I said earlier, I did not challenge teachers’ perceptions of their experiences even when I was aware that they might be overly critical of the process or the principals. To challenge the participants would not be the most appropriate approach to use when people are telling their stories because it could have a negative effect on how and what they tell.

Two principals were selected from two different schools to form part of the study and thus shed light on the selection criteria used when an educator was declared in excess. I felt they would also be able to offer some insight into the problems that a school experiences when teachers are redeployed. The schools selected would be schools where one or more of its educators had been declared in excess. School A was one that was able to absorb the loss of the post by employing a teacher out of school funds. In other words, the school governing body was able to re-appoint the

teacher or a different teacher to absorb the workload. School B was one where the school did not have the financial resources to employ a teacher out of school funds to absorb the workload of the teacher who was declared in excess. The workload of that teacher therefore had to be redistributed amongst the remaining teachers.

3.7 The Interviews

I set up interviews with four teachers who had been declared in excess. I asked them questions related to their qualifications and their number of years teaching experience. This information helped me to gain an insight into whether the teachers were selected on grounds of their lack of qualifications or experience. This information was correlated at a later stage when the principals are asked to elaborate on the basis for selecting particular teachers. It was interesting to compare what the teachers perceive to be the reasons for being identified as being in excess with the reasons given by the principals for identifying a particular person. Teachers were also asked to relate their experiences of being identified as being in excess and how this has affected them on a professional and personal level. The interviews were recorded on audio tape with the permission of the participants, so that their responses could be transcribed at a later stage. As the interviews were semi-structured, I was able to delve deeper and clarify their responses.

The interviews were held at a place that was most convenient for the teachers concerned. In cases where they requested that the interviews be conducted at their respective schools, I got permission from the principals to set up the meeting there. If, however, they chose to have the interviews on 'neutral ground' then I held the interview at place and time that suited them. The same modus-operandi was followed for the interviews with the principals.

3.8 Research Ethics

The biggest problem in conducting a science of human behaviour is not selecting the right sample size or making the right measurement. It's doing those things ethically. (Bernard, 2000:22)

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:101–102) suggest that “most ethical issues in research fall into one of four categories: protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues”. For these researchers, **protection from harm** means “researchers should not expose participants to undue physical or psychological harm” (Leedy & Ormond, 2005:101). Participants in my study were informed beforehand that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Furthermore, the nature of the questions was not such that they could cause some psychological harm to the participants. Participants were also reminded throughout that they could refuse to answer a question if they did not feel comfortable doing answering it. They were also encouraged during the interviews to inform me if any of the questions caused them any ‘discomfort’ or if they felt ‘agitated’ by it. None of the participants communicated such feelings to me during the interviews.

Taking account of the need to have **informed consent** meant that the participants had to be told the nature of the study to be conducted and then given an opportunity to choose whether they wanted to participate or not (Leedy & Ormond, 2005:101). All participants in my study received a letter outlining the research that I was planning and what I hoped to achieve by doing it. In this letter it was made very clear to them that their participation in the study was voluntary. They also got a brief description of what their participation in it would entail. The name and contact details of my supervisor was communicated to them so that they could at any time verify details. Participants were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time and that their decisions in this regard would be respected.

Respecting the **right to privacy** meant protecting the identities of the participants and the participating schools. The participants were only referred to as respondent 1, 2, etc. and the schools were called school A or B.

Finally, **honesty with professional colleagues** involved reporting my findings in a complete and honest fashion without misrepresenting what I had done or intentionally misleading others about my findings. I honoured the call not to fabricate data to support a particular conclusion, no matter how seemingly “noble” that conclusion might be (Leedy & Ormond, 2005:102). After the interviews the participants were given a copy of the transcript and asked to verify that it was a true

reflection of what was said during the interviews. After the interviews were transcribed, participants also had an opportunity to read through the transcripts and clarify any issue that they felt had not been transcribed accurately.

In line with the criteria stated by Brewerton and Millward (2001:62 - 63) I ensured that the following ethical criteria were adhered to in my research:

- (i) I ensured that I only involved people after obtaining their written consent;
- (ii) Participants were briefed verbally about the nature and the extent of the study before I obtained their consent.
- (iii) They also received a letter outlining the reasons for the study and what their participation in the study would entail.
- (iv) The participants were made aware of the fact that they could stop the process and withdraw from the research at any time.
- (v) Participants were assured that they did not need to answer any of the questions if they felt uncomfortable doing this.
- (vi) They were assured that their identity and the identity of the schools would not be revealed at any time during the study or when the study was published. The participants were referred to as Respondent 1, 2, etc. and the schools were labelled as School A or B throughout the research report. In this way anonymity of the participants and the participating schools was assured.
- (vii) Participants understood that the findings would be presented in the form of a report to a third party, supervisor and examiners, and they did not have any objections to this. A copy of the research report would be made available to participants and participating schools at their request.

As a researcher I have a duty, not only towards the participants in my study, but also towards the research community to ensure that the above ethical issues are not compromised in any way. I believe firmly that the steps that I took will ensure that the validity and trustworthiness of the research.

3.9 Limitations

Marshall and Rossman (2006; 42) stress that “all proposed research projects have limitations”. They quote Patten (2002: 223) as saying that “a discussion of the study’s limitations demonstrates that the researcher understands this reality”. As a researcher, I am aware that this study is limited. Every effort was made to have a sample that was as representative as possible, but I am aware that the sample chosen was a very small group so it might not be totally representative of the population. Individuals who might have a valuable contribution to make might have been excluded from the study. However, I am confident that the data gathered could be applied to the greater teacher population who have experienced rightsizing and redeployment.

It is true that the issues under investigation are very emotive. Participants were asked to relay their personal experiences of the redeployment process. The fact that they had been selected for redeployment might have prejudiced them and made them critical of the process. Teachers who harbour some resentment against the process, a specific school or principal could be included in the study. Whilst such individuals might have a valuable contribution to make towards this study, it is possible that they might be overly critical of the process. As a teacher who has had some experience of the phenomenon at my school, I might have been influenced by my own feelings and prejudices. I tried not to let these affect the study.

In spite of these limitations, I feel that I have been able to get a fair and honest representation of the issues under investigation.

In the next chapter I will focus on how teachers and principals experienced and dealt with the process of rightsizing and redeployment, as well as their perceptions of how it affected their professional work attitude, their personal lives and health. Finally, I explore how they managed to cope with the process.

CHAPTER FOUR

TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF THE REDEPLOYMENT PROCESS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I focus on the analysis of the data gathered during the fieldwork or data collection phase. The data were collected by doing interviews with the respondents. The information gathered was then collated so that the accounts of the individual respondents could be interpreted. My aim was to gain an insight into the issues that teachers grapple with when dealing with the issue of staff provision in schools and the consequences of redeployment. The accounts of the respondents are presented to give the reader an idea of how the process of rightsizing and redeployment affects the individual. The human stories of the respondents are told without challenging the issues raised by them, so that their fears, frustrations and concerns can be heard. This chapter seeks to tell the “lived experiences” of the teachers during the rightsizing process.

A total number of four (three female and one male) teachers who were declared in excess were interviewed. Of these four respondents, three teachers were subsequently redeployed. The fourth teacher was retained at the school where she was declared in excess because an older staff member decided to take an early retirement package in order to ‘save’ her colleague from redeployment. Two principals at different schools who had to go through the process of declaring teachers in excess were also asked to relay their experiences. The two principals interviewed had been involved the rightsizing of three of the teachers who participated in the study. In this part of the thesis I use the terms ‘Coloured’, ‘Black’ and ‘White’ as descriptors. This was the way in which people were classified before 1994. Although these terms are still used by state departments and various private institutions to gather data, it is unconstitutional to use these terms as a basis to discriminate against any ethnic group. These terms will be used only to give the reader an idea of the learner and staff demographics of the schools under investigation and to what extent integration has occurred.

4.2 Analysing the Data

Data analysis had to be done from the transcripts of the interviews with the respondents. I used the route of analysing the data and clustering similar responses, so that the responses of respondents with similar issues could be grouped. The information given by the respondents was placed in one of the following categories:

(A) Teachers in excess

- (i) Background information on the respondents
- (ii) Teachers' experience of how the impending rightsizing at the school was communicated to them.
- (iii) Teachers' feelings and perceptions about being identified in excess at the school and the redeployment and the affect on them personally and professionally.
- (iv) The level of support given, by the principal or education authorities, to those teachers identified as being in excess.

(B) Principals who had to manage rightsizing and redeployment

- (i) Criteria used to identify the teachers
- (ii) Procedures followed to do the rightsizing
- (iii) Principals' perceptions of the impact of being declared in excess on the teacher's professional abilities?

4.3 Profile of Respondents

4.3.1. Teachers

A total of four teachers participated in the study. The study involved primary schools teachers in two of the education districts within the Western Cape. The following table presents a profile of the participants.

	Sex	Post level when redeployed	Number of years teaching experience	Phase where you have the most experience	Highest qualification
Respondent 1	Female	2	24	Senior & Intermediate Phase	BA, HDE
Respondent 2	Male	1	12	Senior Phase	HOD
Respondent 3	Female	1	16	Foundation Phase	DE III
Respondent 4	Female	1	16	Intermediate Phase	BEd (Hons) Special Needs Education

Table 3: Profile of participants

Female respondents are in the majority of those identified as being in excess. A possible reason for this is that there are more female than male teachers. A principal provided another explanation when he said:

In my schools case the SGB decided to retain the few men at our school. We are in a high risk area and need the 'man' power desperately. Schools have a shortage of male teachers and therefore choose keep them at the school.

At the two schools under investigation, the teaching male staff complement made up an average of 15% of the staff members. At the time when they were declared in excess, the respondents had an average of 17 years teaching experience. The staff members at both schools were older, and most of them had taught at those schools for ten or more years. The schools had not had newly qualified teachers employed for a number of years. One principal attributed this to the fact that permanently employed teachers tend to stay.

4.3.2 Schools and principals

Both schools are primary schools. School A in the past catered for the children of White communities. It caters for learners from grade R to 7. It is situated in a built-up residential area. Housing units are mortar and brick structures which are well maintained. Most of the residents in the area are older people who have been living

there for years. As a result, the majority of learners enrolled at the school are from outside the immediate feeder area of the school. They are transported to school by public transport or by parents who drop and collect their children every day. This school has an aftercare centre for children whose parents can only fetch them after work. Parents pay extra to have their children enrolled at aftercare. The school has seen some significant integration in its learner and staff composition. Up to 60% of its learners are Black and Coloured whilst 35% of the teachers are Coloured, mainly because the majority of learners are transported from nearby previously Coloured only areas. Parents are mostly part of the middle to higher income groups. Twenty-five per cent of the staff members (teaching and non-teaching) are employed by the school governing body (SGB). The teachers employed by the SGB receive a salary equivalent to what the WCED pay a post level 1 teacher. These teachers are entitled to paid sick leave. They receive a thirteenth cheque at the end of each year equivalent to a month's salary. This is all paid for with funds raised from the parents through school fees and fund raising efforts in which parents and learners are compelled to participate.

School B is situated in an area that caters predominantly for Coloured learners. It offers dual medium classes from grades 1 to 7. It serves people in the lower income group, as is evident from the basic low cost mortar and brick housing units in the area of the school. Many of these houses have informal structures (shacks or Wendy houses) built in the yard to accommodate large or extended families. There are also three informal settlements (serviced squatter areas) within walking distance from the school. Serviced squatter areas are informal settlements for which the municipality have provided the basic services like shared running water (outside taps) and communal toilet systems. A large percentage of these parents are dependent on the monthly grant that they get from the state. Those people in the area who are fortunate enough to have work are blue collar or factory workers who earn wages that would classify them as low income workers. According to the principal, up to 90% of the parents cannot afford to, or do not want to, pay school fees. In January 2009, the school had a learner total of 1 145 learners and 32 teachers. There is virtually no integration since only eight of learners come from the nearby Black township and the staff complement is Coloured. They have an average of 45 learners per class, but the grade 4 classes have up to 50 learners per

class. The grade 7 classes have an average of 35 learners per class as a result of the high drop-out rate amongst learners in the senior phase. The principal, deputy and two senior teachers are not class teachers, but offer certain subjects in the Senior and Intermediate Phases. Teaching staff have to cope with various socio-economic problems which have negative spin-offs for the school. These include constant burglaries and vandalism, absenteeism, anti-social behaviour of learners and poor parent involvement.

4.4 Procedures followed to inform teachers of imminent rightsizing

Teachers at the two schools did not have the same experience of the processes followed to inform them of the imminent rightsizing. At School A, the principal called a staff meeting early March 2007. He informed the staff that the tenth day enrolment totals indicated a drop in the number of learners enrolled at the school compared to the same period in the previous year. His (the principal's) calculations showed that the school would lose two teacher posts when the staff establishment was made available in September of that year, and some teachers would be declared in excess at that point. The principal stressed that although every teacher at the school was invaluable to the institution, he would have to weigh up the needs of the school and make decisions accordingly. Staff members were encouraged to apply for posts, especially promotion posts, at other schools when a new List of Vacancies became available. The List of Vacancies is a document that is made available at least twice per year by the Western Cape Education Department. In it all posts – post level 1 (teacher), post level 2 (Education Specialist / Head of Department), post level 3 (Deputy Principal) and post level 4 (Principal) – are advertised and teachers can apply for these posts.

The process was handled differently at School B. Rumours first surfaced at the school in early October 2007 that the school had received the staff establishment for the New Year and that some posts would be lost. There was no official word from the office (principal and senior staff members) and this fuelled the rumours at the school. Three weeks after the rumours surfaced, the principal called a meeting to inform the staff members that he had received the staff establishment. He confirmed that the school would lose a post level 1 teacher's post. At that stage he

was just willing to say that the School Governing Body would look at the situation and that he would get back to the staff at a later stage. Staff members were in a frenzied state because of the way in which this delicate matter was handled by the principal. They felt that he was unsympathetic towards the majority of teachers who were in the post level 1 category and who faced redeployment. All teachers at the school who were on post level 1 were on tender hooks awaiting further developments. The principal from School B had this to say:

You must understand that this (rightsizing) is a very unpleasant task. The whole situation is dumped in your lap and as principal you have no option but to deal with it. I deal with it by dealing with the situation as a clinical process. I have to determine what is in the school's best interest. No matter which way the decision goes, someone is going to feel that they are being unfairly targeted.

As I have already said, these teachers at School B experienced some level of job insecurity (as described in Chapter Two) as a result of the impending rightsizing process. In the following section I will give some more detail regarding job insecurity.

4.5 Criteria used when identifying teachers

When asked about the criteria used by the school to identify the teachers who would be declared in excess, both principals claim that the process was entirely fair. One principal said:

The interest of the school is central to any decisions taken. You must also remember that the whole process is steered by the Governing Body. An analysis was done to determine where the school can 'afford' to make the cut without causing too much disruption to the school program and coherence

Another principal said that:

The circuit manager scrutinised every aspect of the rightsizing process. The instruction right from the start (from the area office) was that there must be no reason for teachers to dispute the process. Everything must be done according to the book.

He emphasised the fact that the correct procedures had to be followed. When asked about the involvement of unions in the process, he claimed that schools are not compelled to have union representatives present. They (schools) could, however, invite such representatives to observe the process if they wanted to.

One of the principals admitted that the SGB had decided that the school could not lose any of the few male staff members as they needed these individuals so that there is a “sense of security” on the school grounds.

Teachers at grassroots level do not necessarily buy into the claims that the process is fair and transparent. They feel that the principal has some power to manipulate the process:

He (the principal) decides what is needed at the school and merely conveys this to the governing body. They (the SGB) just follow him blindly without questioning his motives.

4.6 Effect of being declared in excess

4.6.1 Personal effects

The respondents all felt that being declared in excess had a negative effect on their personal well-being and health. One respondent said:

There were instances in the past where I was sick and would drag myself out of bed to be at school. After I was informed that I would be declared in excess, I was off sick more often. I think that I just did not care anymore. It was not that I was too lazy to go to school. I was in and out by the doctors more often than ever before. A common cold for example would get me down for days, sometimes weeks.

The teacher impressed upon me that she was the type of person who would be on the job no matter what the circumstances. She would sometimes neglect her family because she would put off taking her own sick children to a doctor as she had to be at work (school). She would thus put school before her family. One can therefore understand that the teacher ‘felt betrayed’, as she said at a later stage, when she was declared in excess.

After being declared in excess, the families of the respondents were also on the receiving end of the mood swings and bouts of depression. Some of the respondents described being short tempered, aggressive and just being agitated by trivial things happening in class and even at home. Children and spouses alike were on the receiving end of the erratic mood swings of the respondents.

I would sometimes lose my temper and would be in a state. My family and even my learners would bear the brunt of these outbursts. I would realise at a later stage that I had over-reacted to a minor situation.

Respondents reported experiencing a sense of burnout. Pienaar (2007) describes burnout as

a state of emotional and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It can occur when you feel overwhelmed and unable to meet constant demands. As the stress continues, you begin to lose the interest or motivation that led you to take on a certain role in the first place. Burnout reduces your productivity and saps your energy, leaving you feeling increasingly hopeless, powerless, cynical, and resentful. The unhappiness burnout causes can eventually threaten your job, your relationships, and your health. These individuals experienced severe sleep deprivation and excessive tiredness. This is not necessarily a physical tiredness, but a mental tiredness - not having the will or energy to tackle even the smallest of problems and challenges, both at home and at work.

In the words of one of them, respondents who participated in the study described “breaking down, crying, sleepless nights, worrying, anger, disappointment, exhaustion”. One respondent reported experiencing anxiety attacks. These attacks were so severe that her medical doctor referred her to a psychologist for counselling. She subsequently attended counselling sessions for more than eight months.

The attacks were so bad that it would feel like I am dying. I could not breathe and felt like there was a heaviness pressing down on my chest. I thought that my heart would stop at any minute... The attacks would come any time... during the day or even at night. I would sometimes be in class when I felt an attack coming on. I once had an attack while at one of the shopping centres. People must have thought that I was crazy... I just dropped everything and ran out of the

store. Lucky for me my husband was with me and he could take me to a doctor for medication.”

4.6.2 Professional effects

Being declared in excess or redundant at any job can have detrimental effects on a person's life. If you see yourself as a person who has given more than is expected, it can be a particularly hard blow to deal with:

I gave everything to the school ... every bit of energy went into helping to build up the school and the learners. After that (being declared in excess) I just did not care anymore.

When there is the perception that teachers who are of less value to the institution are allowed to stay, the whole process can be so much more hurtful for the individual. This leads to resentment towards the institution, principal and even the rest of the staff.

Those people (teachers) who never did anything for the school...who were a zero on a contract ... they could stay. I did so much for the school, but had to go. That is difficult to accept.

It also has a very negative impact on the person's professional attitude at the school. A principal describes the changes that he observed in a teacher after he (the teacher) was declared in excess as follows:

I could see that there was a drop in the teacher's performance at the school. He would be late more often ... at times ignoring tasks given by the office and very often he did not meet deadlines. I had to call him in more than once to reprimand him about the situation. I think this made him more resentful towards me and the school.

Teachers who are declared in excess feel there is a stigma attached to them. In their perception, the other teachers and principals think that only lazy, undisciplined teachers at a school are declared in excess.

If you therefore apply at a school, they think that you are one of those teachers who fall into that category. You are labelled even before you had an opportunity to prove your worth. You actually feel a sense of shame that you were the one chosen.

Another teacher said that:

It makes a person doubt yourself. You ask yourself questions like – was I such a bad teacher that this would happen to me? Don't all my years of dedication and hard work mean anything? Nowadays I just do what is expected of me...nothing more, nothing less. Why should I give everything when the same thing could happen again?"

This is a sentiment expressed by more than one teacher who formed part of the study. They will not do more than is expected of them in terms of the conditions of employment. The teachers feel that they will not be caught in a situation again where they do so much and are then declared in excess. The fear of all respondents was that they would ultimately be the ones who would have to leave when rightsizing took place again at their schools.

I get the feeling that I will have to go again when the school have to lose someone in future.

What is the use of it all? I am sitting here... I do my work and wait for the next round of redeployments.

Although the other respondents did not mention that they had experienced stress, some of them described a few of the classic signs that could be stress related: *having problems sleeping, panicking when they would think about the situation that they are in, feeling sick, just wanting to give up, etc.*

Other respondents use descriptors like *irritable, restlessness, mood swings, general negativity, inability to cope, emotional outbursts and feelings of frustration and inability to trust*. These are some of the classic signs of stress related disorders as described by Hart (2007) and the American Institute of Stress (2008). Brown, Ralph and Bremer (2002:) point out that “[s]tress and organisational change like downsizing can be the cause of increased absenteeism and low morale”.

4.7 Support by school and education department

The respondents felt that there was very little or no support for the teachers who were identified as being in excess. The one teacher felt that they were ‘discarded’ at

the school, especially by the principal, where they have put so many years into. Respondent 1 puts it as follows:

Two teachers were declared in excess at that time. After the principal had informed us that we would be declared in excess, he basically broke all contact and ties with us. We were still at the school for a few months after being declared in excess. The principal however informed us that we do not have to attend staff meetings or school functions anymore. We were outcasts who could not mix with the other people. I felt bitter.

The only measure of support from the Western Cape Education Department was that it compelled schools where vacancies existed to shortlist teachers who were declared in excess at other schools. Those teachers had to be invited for interviews and considered as possible candidates. In terms of the preface to the WCED List of Vacancies 1/2008, section 1.3, "A teacher who is in excess and applies for a post must be shortlisted for that post if his or her current rank is the same as the rank of the post for which he or she is applying, i.e. if he or she will accept a horizontal transfer."

Other than that teachers feel that they are basically outcasts after the process has run its course. They feel abandoned by not only their employer, but also the Unions who are supposed to protect their rights:

... those fat cats in the unions only care about themselves. When I complained to my (union) rep, I was told that they can only investigate if there is prove that the process was procedurally flawed.

The teachers also claim that they did not get much support from the WCED or education officials.

4.8 Perceived problems associated with rightsizing

4.8.1 Abuse of Power

Some of the respondents felt that the principal is in a position to abuse the power that s/he holds over the educators. It is felt that as principal of the institution he/she has powers delegated to him/her by the WCED. This coupled with the perceived

'power' that he/she wields over the school governing body makes him/her even more powerful:

I have no faith in the Governing Body. They allow the principal to pull the wool over their eyes. Whatever the principal says is law. I was co-opted to the Governing Body when a teacher, served on it, was on sick leave for three months. I saw how (the principal) would tell them (the governing body) Everything he said would be accepted by them. Nobody challenged him. He goes to the meetings every month ... tell them what he has done and that he is still going to do ... just so that it can be minuted so that his actions are 'lawful'. I have witnessed how he treats them like a bunch of kids.

Teachers perceive that this (delegated and perceived) power can become a dangerous weapon in the hands of a ruthless principal who is out to 'settle a score with a staff member' for whatever reason. A principal was asked to respond to this perception and had the following to say:

Do they really think that I or any other principal would be so petty as to hold a grudge against a staff member and use my power to get rid of that person? Principals are professional people who conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Another principal responded in the following way to the accusation that he manipulates the governing body members:

At my school the governing body members has on average a grade six education. I do not have any say about which parents get elected to represent the majority of parents on the Governing Body. I get this group of people and have to work with them, no matter what their limitations. Yes, at times I tell them what needs to be done for the sake of moving forward on a matter. This, however, does not mean that I am manipulating them. They have a right to disagree with me at any time and there have been times in the past where they have done just that.

4.8.2 Workload

Teachers in general agree that the workloads of those who remain at the school are increased by rightsizing. The work of the person who is redeployed has to be redistributed between the remaining teachers on that post-level at the school. It is seldom the principal or senior staff members who feel the burden.

They just give the class teachers bigger classes and say that there is very little that can be done about it. You either accept it or it could be your posts that might be in jeopardy in future. We sit with 40 to 45 learners per class at this school. I can't even walk around in my classroom. I have to squeeze sideways through the desks to get to the learners. In a school where the majority of learners are experiencing socio-economic problems like poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, neglect, physical and sexual abuse – to mention but a few, this is a recipe for disaster. We experience severe disciplinary problems and I think it is directly related to the overcrowded classes we have.

Other than the academic workloads that increase for those who remain, there are other spheres of school life that still need to go on in spite of the setbacks. Schools have extensive extra-mural sports and cultural activities that have to go ahead. Those who remain are expected to take on the workload of the teacher who has left.

4.8.3 Labelling of the excess teacher

Teachers identified for redeployment feel that they are labelled by others as being the lazy, no-good teachers at the school. Labelling is a result of other people's perceptions or the stereotyping of a person or group. Certain characteristics, either positive or negative, are attached to the person or group on the grounds of false perceptions. Why is this? If there are clear criteria to determine who is in excess, why are they labelled or feel they are labelled?

A respondent was redeployed to a school where she was not the Governing Body's list as their first choice of candidate to be appointed in the post. The general procedure is that, the Governing Body lists the candidates interviewed in order of preference for the post. This list is sent to the Education Department as the recommendation of the Governing Body for the post to be filled. The candidate at the top of the list is the teacher considered to be the most suitable person for the job.

In this case the preferred candidate was employed as a temporary teacher at the school for a year prior to the post being advertised. The Education authorities overturned the Governing Body's recommendations and redeployed the respondent who was in excess at another school to fill the post. The respondent had the following to say:

I have had the unpleasant experience of joining a new staff after redeployment. Some people are kind and make you feel welcome, but some of them are very hostile. They (new colleagues) look at you as if you are something that the cat dragged in. I think one of the aspects that made them so hostile was because their friend was not employed to fill the vacant position. I truly felt like an outsider for a long time and they made a point of showing me how they felt about me. They would be uncooperative, gossip about me, ignore me to the extent where some people would not even greet me or just got up and left if I should join their company. You have to prove yourself all over and show that you were not redeployed because you are one of the lazy no good teachers. It took a long time before I felt that I belong.

(c) It should be noted that Resolution 7 of 2002 (PSCBC) spells out the rules applicable to redeployment as follows:

- (b) *All employees affected by transformation and restructuring process must be:*
 - (i) *treated fairly and in terms of relevant legislation and collective agreements; and*
 - (ii) *informed of the process to be followed in attempting to suitably accommodate them in the public service and any other sphere of government.*
- (c) *The employee may make representations on his or her own behalf or be assisted by a representative.*
- (d) *The employer must duly consider the representations made by the employee and/or his or her representative before making a final decision.*
- (e) *An excess employee may only be appointed in a post at a level equivalent to his or her post immediately before he or she became in excess.*
- (f) *The employer must apply measures to facilitate and enhance redeployment, which includes:*
 - (i) *provide training for excess employees to meet the requirements of vacant posts;*

- (ii) *allow employees to retire early;*
 - (iii) *where appropriate, approve applications for a severance package to excess employees who apply for that package as provided for in clauses 8.2(b), 8.3(b) and 9.2(a); and*
 - (iv) *fill existing vacant and funded posts.*
- (g) *Excess employees must participate in the redeployment and retraining process.*
- (h) *Subject to due processes, including being offered the opportunity to make representations, employees who unreasonably refuse to be redeployed will be deemed to have resigned.*

Furthermore, the Area Office of the WCED, particularly the IMG (Institutional Management and Guidance) Advisors, must assist the principal in the execution of the rightsizing process.

One can see that educators find being identified as being in excess and then redeployed an emotionally draining experience. The fact that these individuals feel unwelcome at schools and unappreciated by their seniors and peers makes the whole experience so much worst. At the very least, these educators could become resentful.

In the next chapter I will draw some conclusions from the study and make a few recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 The Rightsizing Process

We have to accept that rightsizing is here to stay. It is a process used not only by the education sector, but also by almost every other sector, to bring their staff complement, company needs and available resources in line with each other. In order for organisations to remain relevant in a global society, they must be able to adapt to the challenges that they face, but they have to do so within the constraints of a specific budget. In the case of South Africa, fiscal discipline aimed at reducing spending and the need to use available human capital optimally also influence the decisions planners and top management make.

As pointed out earlier, a significant proportion of the budget, 6% of GDP and 21% of the national budget (Soudien, 2007), goes towards the funding of education. At present the largest portion of this is spent on staff remuneration. Since the education department, which is committed to neo-liberal policies and fiscal discipline, has to work within the constraints of a limited budget to fulfil all its needs and social responsibilities, it is unable to employ more teachers. The education department, therefore, uses rightsizing to ensure that the available teachers in the system are allocated to schools where there is a need. This means they have to take teachers away from schools where there are more teachers than the current teacher-learner ratio allows.

In some cases rightsizing is handled in a very sympathetic manner. The fears of teachers are acknowledged and the process is dealt with in a manner that is perceived to be fair and open. In such cases all those affected feel that decisions were taken in the interest of the school and the community that it serves. In these cases, the decisions taken are more likely to be accepted and understood by all affected.

In the perception of some teachers at the receiving end of it, the process is not being conducted in a fair, equitable and transparent manner. This is particularly true when the school principal appears to handle the rightsizing process as an opportunity to deal with staff with whom he is at loggerheads. The mere perception that the outcome of rightsizing is determined on these grounds can seriously damage relationships and trust between colleagues, management and the education authorities.

In the next subsection, I make some observations on some things that can influence the way educators experience the process of rightsizing. I also make some general recommendations.

5.1.2 Job Security

The remarks made by some respondents are in line with Pienaar (2007). They contend that the phenomenon of job insecurity significantly affects employee physical and psychological health. They specifically emphasise that organisational performance indicators such as absenteeism and reduced productivity reflect how teachers respond to a lack of job security. The sense that one's job or that certain aspects relating to one's professional life are either under threat of being lost or changed beyond one's control affect one's sense of security. Job insecurity leads to heightened levels of stress and a decline in the morale of staff members. Stress or a decline in morale has a detrimental effect on the general well-being of the teachers concerned. Individuals feel powerless and this in turn can lead to less productive and less motivated staff members. The employer and managers must not at any time underestimate the negative effects that the threat to job security can have on an organisation and its employees.

5.1.3 Stress Factor

A certain amount of stress can be beneficial. However, as is well-documented, high levels of stress caused by job loss or even the threat of job loss negatively affect the well-being of those concerned. Stress results not only from the knowledge that one's job is in jeopardy. Most teachers are individuals who have financial commitments and families they are responsible for. The fear of not being able to

meet their commitments and responsibilities would also be stressful. This could not only affect their personal lives but also those of their families.

The respondents who formed part of this study expressed the view that they were given only limited support from the WCED and principals.

5.1.4 Personal and Professional Effects of Being Declared in Excess

Teachers describe varied emotions when being declared in excess. These include anger, frustration, and feelings of helplessness, shame, mood swings, worry, bitterness and feeling overwhelmed. These are all emotions that can negatively affect a teacher's professional performance. On the one hand, teachers who are declared in excess question their identities and try to find a "fault" within themselves. They equate being identified as being in excess with being a 'bad' teacher. On the other hand, they further conclude that if all their dedication and sacrifices at the school did not have any impact when their fates were decided, then going the extra mile was of no value.

Whenever the process of rightsizing is to be implemented at a school, the teachers should have the reassurance that the interests of the school will be paramount in any decisions that need to be taken. It should be conceded, however, that it might be difficult for teachers to understand and accept that it might be in the best interests of the school for them to leave. We all want to believe that we are irreplaceable and the 'best' for the school. A principal, however, had a different opinion when he said that:

We see the bigger picture. It is not about the individual person and his/her small world. We must not only consider curriculum, but so many other spheres of school that a class teacher for example does not even know exist. I have to look at what is best for the school ... now and over the long term.

It is difficult to convince teachers that what they perceive to be true is not always so. It is therefore important that the actions of all role-players (principal, School Governing Body, Departmental officials) should be such that teachers would have

no reason to question the integrity of the process. This means that the whole process has to be handled in an open and transparent manner.

5.1.5 Support to Teachers

Teachers feel in general that they do not get any or enough support to deal with the emotional impact of being declared in excess. Those involved in the management of the process may not be fully aware of how it can have an impact on the psyche of the individual teachers. It may also be that in trying to detach him/herself from the process of rightsizing because it reduces the chances of disputes being declared, the principal adopts a very clinical manner. This is unfortunate. Professional handling of the rightsizing process should not be done in an inhumane manner. It is especially in these difficult times that teachers should know that they have the support of the management team of the school where they have spent so many years.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.1 The Rightsizing Process

The rightsizing and redeployment process should be handled in a fair and transparent way. The teachers must at all times believe that though this process is unavoidable, their best interests and that of the school will be weighed and protected by all role-players (i.e. education department, unions and school management). If it is decided that letting a teacher go is in the best interests of the school, the teacher should be briefed and counselled in a sympathetic and professional manner. In my opinion, there are too many 'grey areas' when dealing with rightsizing. What I mean by this is that there are not clear, accessible guidelines that all stakeholders in the process could consult. It seems that principals should be given a clear set of guidelines on how to handle rightsizing and redeployment so they can manage the process sympathetically and fairly. At present, principals seem to assume that he/she (alone) knows what is best for the school and has the final say in the matter. This could be because the SGB and Area Office officials merely rubberstamp the principal's recommendations or decisions in some cases. A clear set of guidelines, set up in consultation with principals,

teachers and departmental officials would go a long way to addressing these concerns. The mere perception that the process of identifying an individual in excess and the redeployment of the person is flawed can cause irreparable harm to the credibility of the process.

5.2.2 Job Security

The fact that the educator staff establishment is determined annually makes teachers fear imminent rightsizing and ultimately redeployment. Although job security (or the lack thereof) is not unique to the education sector, the fact that the process is on the agenda every year creates the impression that it is a never ending story.

The fear of redeployment is the highest cause of stress that teachers face. Those who have already been through the experience of being redeployed feel even more insecure. Even though there is no basis in fact for their fears, they are convinced that they will be first in line for redeployment at their current schools. Even if the LIFO (last in, first out) principle is applied, other teachers at the school could be identified. 'Last in' (LIFO) does not mean that the last person to join a school's teaching staff automatically has to be redeployed. A previously redeployed teacher could have fifteen years (in permanent appointments) at other schools, for example. In that case, someone who has fewer years of permanent employment would have to be identified.

As was explained, the fluctuation in a school's enrolment could result in the loss of teaching posts. The education department has to work within the constraints of a limited budget. Bearing this in mind, the department will have to find innovative ways of making teachers feel more secure in their jobs. A possible solution that I would suggest is that school's ESE could be re-evaluated in a three or five year cycle. The average learner enrolment over the past three or five years could be used to calculate the ESE. Teachers would then have a sense of security for a number of years.

Furthermore, when a school has to apply rightsizing, principals should keep teachers informed of every step of the process. It was evident from the way in which

School A handled the process that this would make the process less stressful for teachers.

5.2.3 Stress Factor

The loss of one's job or the threat of possible change to one's status can lead to heightened stress levels. Stress, in turn, affects one's health.

Putting checks and balances in place that would assure teachers that should they would not be victimised and treated in a demeaning way by the school principal. Some of these checks and balances are that Circuit Managers should have more say in the selection process and not just accept the principal's recommendation. Most principals are genuinely open and honest when handling this matter, but in the minds of a number of teachers the principal is in a position of power which she/he may abuse especially if there are some teachers at his/her school who are at loggerheads with him/her. Just a perception that fairness will not prevail is enough to cast doubt on the whole process and even lead to prolonged court cases against the education department or expensive psychiatric and medical care for the teacher.

The recommendations for dealing with redundant teachers (PAM guidelines) underline that the needs of the school should be of paramount importance. However, these guidelines are open to interpretation and some teachers believe that some principals shamelessly manipulate them. In some cases, perceptions are seen as the truth and no amount of damage control afterwards can rectify these perceptions. One of the informants spelled out her feelings in this regard when she said that the principal could easily use the process of rightsizing to get rid of people whom she/he does not get along with. If people know that they are being treated fairly and that the process followed is transparent and is in both their and the school's best interests, it should help to soften the blow.

Persons who are identified as being in excess should be afforded the professional support to deal with the imminent change of job, site (school), or even job loss and the stress associated with it. The WCED's psychological services are already stretched to the limit in dealing with learner problems. Ideally, the education department should forge partnerships with private psychological service providers

to which teachers can be referred. People who are helped to manage the stress better will be in a better position to deal with the impact of rightsizing on their lives.

5.2.3 Personal and Professional Effects of Being Declared in Excess

Principals and education authorities should acknowledge that the emotions evoked by declared in excess are real and very damaging to the health and well-being of the teachers. It not only affects them on a personal level, but also affects their professional attitudes and performance.

My recommendations with regard to rightsizing and redeployment are:

- (i) The Education Department should commission some independent research to look at all the aspects of rightsizing and redeployment.
- (ii) The Education Department should place a moratorium on rightsizing and redeployment until this research has been done and there is a better understanding of the process, and its consequences.

If the present process continues, then I suggest the following:

- (iii) Set clear guidelines that could help principals and district officials who have to deal with the process.
- (iv) Disseminate these guidelines to all stakeholders so that they are aware of the processes to be followed, their rights and responsibilities in this process.
- (v) Make the process as transparent as possible. This would allay teachers' fear of being victimised.
- (vi) Take account of the fact that married teachers cannot just be uprooted and redeployed to areas that are far away from their families.
- (vii) Train principals to handle the process of rightsizing in a professional, yet sympathetic manner.
- (viii) Accept that being declared in excess generally has a negative impact on the morale, work performance and general health of the individuals affected. Partnerships with multi-disciplinary teams (medical practitioners, psychologist, councillors, etc.) have to be forged so that the necessary support can be given to these individuals.

- (ix) If the statistics warrant doing so, warn teachers well in advance of the possibility of rightsizing. They will then not be lulled into a false sense of security, and those who want to apply for suitable posts at other schools can do this timeously. This could avoid the situation in which teachers are forced to take up a post which they consider unsuitable.

5.2.4 Possible further research

Some areas related to this topic that could benefit from further research in future include:

- How principals who have to manage the process of rightsizing are affected.
- The impact that the constant coming and going of teachers (due to rightsizing) might have on the organisational abilities of schools.
- How schools who cannot afford to employ additional teacher out of school funds cope with the loss of teachers through redeployment.
- A study of the emotions and challenges that teachers who are left behind face after their colleagues, who were declared in excess, have been redeployed.

5.2.5 Summary

Change and organisational restructuring, whether it is in the public or private sector, is a reality in every sphere of life. In order to stay relevant in an ever-changing global society, it is important that business should embrace change or risk becoming stagnant and falling by the wayside. The education sector especially has to guard against this as we are working with learners and students who have to fill their place in society as productive citizens. They need to become critical thinkers who can use their skills to compete with people from every corner of the world.

However, we have to guard against what Heystek et al. (2008:2) refer to as a “hard approach” when dealing with people. In using the hard approach, people are seen as mere resources within the organisation. Resources are physical items or possessions like furniture or vehicles that are used within the company to achieve a required outcome. The inanimate nature of resources means that they can be moved, sold or disposed of. Human resource management theory equates people

with resources that can be moved around within the organisation to achieve certain outcomes. Rightsizing is in line with this notion that humans, in the case of this study teachers, can be moved around like objects to restructure and streamline the education system.

In cases where rightsizing and redeployment are applied to human beings, the “soft approach” should be used. This takes account of the fact that human beings have feelings and emotions and are “influenced by relationships, motivation, communication, conflict and change” (Heystek, 2008:2). We need to acknowledge the negative effects of organisational change on people, and help those who have to manage change, specifically rightsizing, to do it in a more compassionate manner.

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Appendices

Interview Questions

Teachers

1. **How long have you been in the teaching profession?** (years' experience) / Hoe lank is u in die onderwys (jare ondervinding)?
2. **Where do you have the most experience (FP, IP or SP)? How many years?** / In watter fase (GSF, IF of SF) het u die meeste ondervinding? Hoeveel jaar
3. **What is the highest qualification that you have?** / Wat is u hoogste kwalifikasie?
4. **When (what year) were you declared in excess? At what school?** / In watter jaar was u oortollig verklaar? By watter skool?
5. **How did you hear that the school was about to declare some teachers in excess? (staff meeting, one on one, etc.)** / Op watter wyse het u verneem dat van die personeel op die skool oortollig verklaar sou word?
6. **When did you find out for the first time that you were the one chosen to be declared in excess?** / Wanneer het u vir die eerste kee uitgevind dat u die persoon is wat oortollig verklaar is?
7. **How did you get this information (verbally by principal, rumours, written notice)** / Op watter wyse het u die inligting gekry? (mondelings, gerugte, skriftelike kennisgewing)
8. **How did you feel when you heard that you would be declared in excess?** / Hoe het u gevoel toe u verneem dat u oortollig verklaar is?
9. **Did this news affect you on a.....**
 - (i) **Professional**
 - (ii) **Personal level? How?**
Het die nuus u geaffekteer...
 - (i) op professionele vlak
 - (ii) op ,n persoonlike vlak? Hoe?
10. **How do you feel about the process followed (fair and transparent)?** / Hoe voel u oor die proses wat gevolg was om u oortollig te verklaar (regverdig)?
11. **Were you placed at a school of your choice?** / Was u na ,n skool van u keuse verplaas?
12. **Did the school / WCED provide any form of support, counselling, etc (If yes, in what way)?** / Het die skool / WKOD enige ondersteuning of berading voorsien (Indien ja, in watter vorm)?
13. **Describe your feelings / emotions at this stage regarding redeployment / being declared in excess.** Beskryf u emosies t.o.v. oortollig verklaar word / herontplooiing
14. **Do you think that the process could be open to abuse by those in power? Elaborate.** Dink u dat daar ruimte is in die proses vir diegene in mag om hul mag te misbruik?

Principals

- 1. By when did the school learn that it was going to lose some teachers' posts?**
Teen wanneer hat u geweet dat u skool van sy onderwysers sou verloor?
- 2. Did you have any set criteria to identify who was going to be declared in excess? Was it criteria set by the WCED or by the SGB?**
Het u enige kriteria gehad wat gebruik was om onderwyser(s) oortollig te verklaar? Indien wel, was die kriteria deur WKOD of the Beheerliggaam opgestel.
- 3. What were the main criteria used when the teacher(s) were identified to be declared in excess at your school?**
Wat was die hoofkriteria wat gebruik is om onderwysers te identifiseer?
- 4. Are there guidelines in place (by WCED) to help principals deal with the process of rightsizing and redeployment?**
Het die onderwysdepartement riglyne daargestel waarvolgens prinsipale en beheerliggame moes werk om onderwysers te identifiseer?
- 5. How long did you (the school) have to put plans in place to counter the loss?**
Hoe lank het u gehad om planne in plek te sit om die verlies te absorbeer?
- 6. How were the teachers informed that the number of teachers at the school is above the staff establishment and that rightsizing and redeployment will have to take place?**
Hoe het u die personeel ingelig dat onderwysers oortollig was en dat van hulle uitgeplaas sal moet word na ander skole?
- 7. How do you think the teachers handled the news that one or more of them would be declared in excess?**
Hoe dink u het onderwysers die nuus hanteer?
- 8. Were any measures put in place to offset the impact / help teachers deal with the possible impact of the news (no. 7)?**
Was onderwyser op enige manier bygestaan tydens die proses om die impak te versag? (nr. 7)
- 9. Some teachers feel that principals could abuse their powers to settle a score. How would you respond to such accusations?**
Sommige onderwysers voel dat prinsipale hul 'mag' kan gebruik om van diegene onslae te raak wat hulle nie oor die weg mee kom nie. Hoe sal u op die antuiging reageer?
- 10. How do you think being declared in excess affects a teacher?**
Hoe dink u affekteer die proses (onderwysers wat oortollig verklaar word en herontplooiing) onderwysers?
- 11. Can you think of examples where you could see a change in a person's health and/or professional attitude after being declared in excess?**
Kan u aan 'n voorbeels dink oor hoe die gesondheid en/of professionele houding van onderwyser(s) verander het nadat hulle oortollig verklaar is?