FINAL REPORT

A CASE STUDY OF FOUR SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN THE EQUIP PROJECT OF THE NATIONAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE

Eric Schollar and Associates

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Title: A Case Study of Four Schools Participating in the Equip Project of the National Business Initiative

Executive Summary

1. Research Institution and Authors

Author: Eric Schollar, Eric Schollar and Associates c.c.
Research design: Eric Schollar
Project Manager: Glen Fisher, NBI
Project Coordinator: Kholofelo Sedibe, NBI 2. Research Objectives

The objective of this research project was to undertake four case studies of schools participating in the Education Quality Improvement Project (Equip) of the National Business Initiative, with a view to describing and understanding the internal and external contextual processes of the programme and the intended and unintended products of the NBI's development model in the schools.

In relation to this general objective, the research project identified three specific objectives:
? To understand the importance of context in determining conceptions of quality in the schools
? To understand how the School Development Plan is related to the contextual conceptions of the quality of the schools, and how it expresses their vision of the appropriate response to the problem of achieving quality
? To understand how the School Development Plan is implemented and integrated into the routines and classroom practices of the school.

The objectives outlined here derive from the need to test the central proposition of Equip, namely that its approach to the enhancement of school quality will facilitate an inclusive, locally based process of school development which is sustainable, which addresses the specific needs identified by programme participants, and which is directly relevant to the specific context of each school. This in turn is expected to impact on the 'core business' of the schools, improving the quality and the outcomes of the education provided to learners.

3. Design and methodology

The research adopted a case study approach, reflecting the objectives of the study and the concern to assess the relationship between specific school contexts and the development of effective strategies to improve school quality.

The methodology included weekly visits to the four schools by a team of junior researchers, to systematically observe classroom lessons, tests and examinations, and to collect data on attendance, late-coming, school maintenance and progress with respect to the School Development Plan. Researchers also observed some staff and parent meetings.

Senior researchers visited the schools to conduct in-depth interviews with school principals, management teams and teachers, and to observe various aspects of the context and day to day operation of the school. A total of 96 school visits were undertaken, frequently without prior notice. Consequently, particularly towards the end of the research period, it was possible to assert that the schools were not `on display' for an external observer, and that the research teams' observations fairly closely reflected what was going on most of the time.

4. Main Findings

There can be little doubt that the most evident, and most important impact of Equip in the four schools has been an increased alignment of staff with management, and with each other, around the development of the school. Without a greater degree of agreement, co-operation and accountability between the different members of a school community, too many South African schools can resemble rowing boats in which half the passengers are not rowing at all, and the other half are rowing in different directions. None of the schools would argue that alignment has been uniformly achieved in relation to all of the staff, but all of them do assert that they have made significant progress towards it, and that internal conflict has significantly declined in the schools as a result. Further, the levels of participation, alignment and motivation of all the different elements of the school community improve as the development plans themselves bear fruit; continued implementation of the development plans will further accelerate what is becoming a self-sustaining process.

In terms of locally-based development in relation to the context of the schools, the most important priorities have been the installation of school security and the acquisition of educational facilities like photocopy and video machines, computers and Science kits. No other development programme, of which we are aware, has ever improved school security as its first consequence. That this is the first choice of all four of the school communities involved is both an eloquent testament to the context they experience, and an example of the interaction between context and locally-based planning.

The partnership that delivers EQUIP has evolved from its inception; it has been fortunate in having MEC Mary Metcalfe, chair of its Provincial Board, involved from the very inception of the project. The production of School Development Plans by school-level committees has become provincial policy for the GDE, and EQUIP has trained GDE officials in District N2 to initiate the process in 68 schools.

Experience has shown that it is at District level that capacity to actually manage, monitor and support the process in schools is limited and, unless this capacity is increased, it is at this level that outcomes at larger scales my fail to match policies based on successful small-scale pilots. Especially if the success of the small-scale pilot was heavily dependent on an NGO to provide school and classroom level monitoring and support.

This report was commissioned by the directors of the National Business Initiative (NBI) as a result of a successful application by the NBI to the President's Education Initiative (PEI), administered by the Joint Education Trust (JET).

The brief called for a case study to be conducted in four of the nine Mamelodi schools participating in the EQUIP Project; all four are primary schools. Research commenced in late-July, at the beginning of the third term, and was complete by the end of November, the end of the fourth term. This is the second and final report.

Section 1: Background to the Report

The research design for the study was developed in conjunction with EDUPOL, and was described in detail in the First Report of June 1998. This report also contained copies of all of the data collection instruments to be used in the research. These details and instruments are not repeated here but, for the sake of completeness, a short summary of the school-based research follows.

? Four junior researchers (Honours Psychology students at the University of Pretoria) visited the schools once per week over the third and fourth terms, spending one full school day there on each occasion. When possible, they observed classroom lessons, sat in on class tests and exams, and collected data about attendance, lateness, school maintenance and the progress of the SDP. They were also invited to attend some staff and parent meetings.

? Senior researchers' visits consisted of in-depth interviews with principals, Deputies and HoD's followed by visits to classrooms and other facilities (media centre, computer centre, etc.), shorter interviews with teachers, a lesson observation if possible, and a general `tour' of the whole school; offices, store rooms, grounds, the perimeter. The senior researchers' visits were concentrated on periods when experience has shown little classroom instruction occurs; the first and last weeks of term and the month of November. The senior researchers also visited each of the schools for other reasons; research orientation meeting, basic school data collection and pupil testing.

? In all, 96 visits were carried out; 80 by the junior researchers, 64 of which yielded formal data (the rest were spent attending school functions, meetings etc), and 16 by the senior researchers. By agreement, the senior researchers frequently visited the schools without prior notice. The willingness of the schools to participate to this extent, and their understanding of what the research was supposed to achieve, indicates an above average awareness of quality as an educational issue. In any event, the practice of arriving without notice meant that schools, particularly towards the end of the research period, were not `on parade' for an external observer, and that what we were seeing was very likely what goes on all the time.

1. Objectives of the Study
The general objective of the study was to understand and describe the internal and external contextual processes of EQUIP in relation to the intended and unintended

products of the NBI's development model in the schools. There were three specific elements to this general objective:

? To understand the importance of context in determining conceptions of quality in the schools.
? To understand how the School Development Plan is related to the contextual conceptions of quality of the schools, and how it expresses their vision of the appropriate responses to the problem of achieving quality.
? To understand how the School Development Plan is implemented and integrated into the routines and classroom practices of the school.

The central proposition of EQUIP is that its approach to fostering and facilitating the enhancement of school quality will lead to an inclusive, locally based school development which is sustainable and targeted on specific needs identified by the participants; and hence is directly relevant to the specific context of each school. This, in turn, will impact upon the 'core business' of the schools; improving the quality and outcomes of the education that is offered to their pupils.

2. The Problems Addressed by EQUIP

NBI literature identifies the central problem addressed by EQUIP as the need to improve the quality of educational outcomes in South African schools. This is seen as the next step in the national development of the education system as access to schooling progressively improves.

The scale and depth of the quality challenge to South African schools is a matter of universal public concern and debate. A few of the major indices of the present lack of quality in South African schools have been described as:

• poor retention rates
• a collapsing infrastructure
• high numbers of repeaters, some of them for the second or third time
• poor outcomes, poor matriculation results in particular
• low levels of teacher and pupil motivation in many schools
• low levels of parental and community support in many areas
• low levels of alignment around school development in many school communities

3. The Strategy of EQUIP

The strategy to be applied to the development of school quality is clearly described in N13I literature.

"Pupil achievement has less to do with teacher/pupil ratios and per capita spending than it has to do with teacher education, basic school facilities, attitudes, and government and administration. To improve the quality of education, therefore, it is necessary to concentrate on improving these basic educational elements, and on the interrelationships between them ... EQUIP.-is an attempt to harness all potential resources and draw in all the relevant role players to improve the achievement levels of South African school children. This is the basic quality-improvement goal. "

The development of partnerships, with government playing a central role, is laid at the heart of the strategic design of the delivery system. It is to be a national programme, implemented and evolved on a decentralised basis that has a significant impact on provincial education policy.

4. Establishment of the EQUIP Programme in Schools

EQUIP is controlled in Gauteng by a Provincial Board incorporating the major stakeholders - Provincial DE, Private Sector and the NIB. as a partnership between business and government to direct and guide the programme. It is chaired by Mary Metcalfe, MEC for Education. Direct implementation is managed by a Project Team, incorporating the district GDE, the Catholic Institute of Education (CIE) as the delivery agency, private sector representatives and the NBI.

As a consequence of the partnership structure on which EQUIP is based, the Provincial GDE identified the District (N2) in which pilot intervention would take place. The District invited schools in Mamelodi to apply to participate in the project. All of the schools (15) that responded were included in an orientation programme, facilitated by the CIE. A concurrent needs analysis of the schools in their context was undertaken. Nine of these schools decided, as a result of this process, to participate in the EQUIP programme. In these schools. support was given to the establishment of a School Development Committee (SDC) - a sub-committee of the School Governing Body (SGB). The SDC is assisted to develop, through a process inclusive of the school community, a School Vision and Mission, together with an associated School Development Plan (SDP), Development Budget and resource Mobilisation Plan. The SDC is seen as the means through which participation by external actors can be invited and sustained, and through which external agencies can relate to the school community as a whole.

School plans are discussed with the District GDE and the CIE, and submitted to the Project Team for suggested amendments before recommendation to the Project Board. Plans can include any element of school development, in the context of the school's needs, but must include the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in the school before acceptance.

5. Funding

The GDE committed itself to a significant contribution toward the funding of the EQUIP project; R3 million over three years. The original intention was to transfer the funds to EQUIP through the Joint Education Trust. Legal complications (once transferred the amount is irrevocable) lead to a change, An initial amount of R100 000 was released by the GDE and matched by another R100 000 from the NBI through the Jim Joel Trust. Over 1996/97 the NBI raised a further RI million for EQUIP; for NBI costs, payment to CIE, project initiation and incentive grants. At present the NBI is negotiating with the GDE for funding to complete the transfer of the total of R30 000 committed to each school, and to confirm that another RI million will be released for 1999. Twenty private sector companies are now involved in EQUIP through the NBI. Funding has also been received from the French Embassy.

In all, this amounts to a very substantial funding base indeed. If it can be maintained, the schools will all be able to complete their development plans; and there can be no reasonable doubt that they will have been significantly improved once they do so.

6. Delivery of EQUIP

The following summary of the actual field delivery of EQUIP is derived from reports presented to the NBI Project Team.

OUTPUT	PROGRESS
1. Complete 9 school plans	All plans, priorities and budgets completed
2. Release R270 000 to schools to support plans	First tranche of R110 000 released
3. Provide incentive for development committee	Project initiation grant of R2 000 per school
4. Provide incentive for production of plans	Teaching and learning aids to value of R3 000 per school
5. Provide training to schools to support plans	Financial management Motivational workshops Strategic planning Team building Conflict resolution Project management Budgeting Classroom management Victim to victor
6. Training to build institutional capacity of District GDE	Strategic planning Financial management

In addition to formal delivery, the CIE visits the schools twice a month to provide support, advice, feedback and monitoring. The NBI has also secured the support of businesses that have provided, as well as funding, in kind-support to the programme and to the schools; AECI, KPMG, Q Data Business Consulting, McKinsey, Southern Life, Billiton, Liberty Life, JCI, Mercedes-Benz.

7. Note on Access to Schools

EDUPOL secured the permission of the GDE District N2 for the research team to commence research in Mamelodi schools - the written permission of the Acting District Director was received on the 30[-h] April:

> "Permission is hereby granted to you and your team of researchers to conduct research into EQUIP schools in Mamelodi...Hoping that you will find your interaction with these institutions inspiring and pleasurable ".

However, at a subsequent meeting of EDUPOL and the research team to discuss logistics, we were informed that research could not commence; the support of teacher organisations still had to be obtained, and, further, the District required that researchers be accompanied by District staff on all school visits. Funding from the NBI for the transport costs of the GDE for these visits was requested.

EDUPOL and the District subsequently agreed that, once research commenced, researchers would be able to visit schools weekly and district officials would visit them in their schools once a month to monitor and facilitate the process. A consultation meeting with the relevant unions was arranged by the District. EDUPOL kept the Acting Director informed of these developments and received acknowledgement on the 23[rJ] June.

> ¯It is highly appreciated to hear that District officials may not of a necessity be expected to accompany researchers on a regular basis. I however would

Appreciate it if all procedures discussed and agreed upon... in terms of recognising the importance of Employee Organisation in this project are not neglected... The concern I would like to raise is that the copy of minutes you sent through does not flag the issue around the role employee organisations should play in this project... maybe this has been an oversight on your part. "

At the meeting between OEDIPAL, the District and the research team with SAD (TUATA, though invited, did not attend), the SADTU representatives indicated that they had to consult with their committee before making any decisions. EDUPOL should provide more detail for this consultation, and a subsequent meeting with the Education Desk would decide on the acceptability and conduct of the research. The District indicated that they did not wish to jeopardise their positive relations with SADTU, and that they accepted SADTU's proposed course of action.

EDUPOL and the senior researcher indicated that a significant period had already been lost; the longer the present delay lasted, the less likely there would be enough time to complete the research in 1998. In order to help inform the consultation process, we requested permission to visit the schools with a District official to directly ascertain their willingness to participate in the research. SADTU agreed to this request. At all of these visits, the principal and the SADTU site representative welcomed the proposed research at their school.

School visits and lesson observations finally commenced in August - fully three months after permission to do so was first received from the Education Department. In the event, none of the researchers ever were accompanied by, or even met, a District official during the total of 64 visits completed. Further, the schools were co-operative and accepting of the research, and the researchers, throughout; it is hard to ignore the feeling that three months were lost for no substantive reason. It is also hard to ignore the feeling that there is something strange about a situation in which an employee organisation, rather than the Education Department, has final say on access to State schools for research conducted on behalf of the PEI.

Section 11: Contextual and Environmental Factors Affecting Quality

There is little doubt that local and larger contexts play an important role in the understanding of and responses to concepts of development and absolute quality in the schools.

They are all located in one district (N2) of the GDE in the urban township of Mamelodi, east of Pretoria. Like most township schools they are housed in brick buildings with ceiling, concrete floors and corrugated iron roofs, and are generally better provisioned than schools in rural areas. The degree to which they have been maintained varies but all four have made genuine efforts to do so.

1. Socio-economic Context

The most obvious contextual factor is the socio-economic environment of the school; in the present case, School X appears to draw more of its pupils from very poor families than the other three, followed by School Y, whereas School Z appears to have rather more pupils from middle class families than the others.

The impact of this factor on conceptions of quality in different communities is so well understood in our environment that it is taken for granted throughout the rest of the report. For one thing, pupils from middle class families are generally exposed to a much higher quantity and quality of spoken and written English and, since schooling is largely conducted in this language, particularly at senior primary levels, they have an advantage. Secondly, they are more likely to live in stable families with opportunities for home study and parental assistance. It will be noted that, with a few exceptions consistent with such a small sample, pupil test scores reflect these class differences.

It should also be noted that many township schools have experienced emigration of the children of middle class parents to other, usually ex-Model C, schools leaving the majority of the remaining pupils from poorer backgrounds. The situation is further complicated by a parallel process; township schools perceived to be `good' schools attract pupils whose parents cannot afford ex-Model C fees from other schools in its area. As if these demographics were not enough, all township schools have experienced, to one degree or another, an increased number of enrolments from informal shack settlements. These children add to the complex socio-economic flux of the environment within which the schools operate.

In one interesting, and very practical, response to this context, School W has offered unemployed people an opportunity to grow food on the school grounds. Rent is not charged and the produce is not sold for profit; the intention is simply to provide practical self-help support to the poorest members of the community surrounding the school. The food gardens flank two sides of the school and are evidently both well cared for and productive. A portion of the produce is, in turn, given to the school to support its own internal project to provide lunch to indigent pupils.

2. Persistence of Differences between Schools

While the struggle to integrate formerly white schools has been won, the persistence of differences between the ex-Model C schools and the township schools creates an ongoing tension; not always negative.

On the one hand, as we noted above, the emigration of pupils of middle class families has tended to concentrate the pupils from poorer families in township schools. This is an inevitable consequence of the equally inevitable shift from an `abnormal' race-based society to a `normal' class-based society. (I use `inevitable' in a pragmatic, rather than an historical-determinist fashion here!). In one Soweto primary school in which ESA has conducted research in the past, pupil (English) literacy scores dropped over the mid-nineties as a consequence of emigration, taking with them, one assumes, the rest of the scores as well. This must be a common experience throughout the country.[The decision

of virtually all School Governing Bodies to use English as the medium of instruction makes the issue of language one of the most fundamental problems facing South African education at present.]

On the other hand, the more integrated the ex-Model C schools become, and the less they look like apartheid schools, the more they provide a sense of what all schools could become. It should be remembered that teachers are themselves members of the middle class, and that most of their own children go to ex-Model C schools. They notice what their child and the teachers do, and what resources and procedures exist, at these schools. The best of them are trying to introduce similar practices into township schools, and have made efforts to seek assistance from the schools their children attend. In two of the EQUIP schools; School Z and School W supportive contact with ex-Model C schools, Valencia Primary and La Montague Primary respectively, has been established via this route. School X, also, has received support from the Deutsche School through an outreach programme.

This kind of contact, and the peer mentoring and sharing of plans and materials it can produce, is increasingly common in all of the provinces. This year, for example, I have seen a junior primary classroom in KZN where the teacher used a sequential list of phonemes to work through with pupils, along with photocopied pupil materials and an audio tape, given to her by another teacher. Prior to this support "I did not even know that there was a sequence that I should use and, anyway, I wouldn't have been able to teach it". In Gauteng, I was shown a software programme used to generate time tables according to requirements given to the school by another principal.

This is, in my view, one of the more promising practical possibilities to emerge in recent years. Because it often happens at an informal level, the participants do not feel that they are part of some special project, and are simply experiencing professional contact with peers; a new experience for many of them. In such an environment it is much easier to seek and offer advice and support without generating rejection or resistance. There is also no reason why more frequent contacts could not be made between better township schools and their less accomplished neighbours.

3. Order, Motivation, Alignment and Quality Improvement
In many urban schools, the secondary schools in particular, an increase of order, compromised in the previous years of political instability, combined with the acceptance of personal responsibility by both teachers and pupils, is critical to the development of quality. The problem is certainly less intense at primary level, especially with regard to the pupils. Rather too many teachers, however, are still characterised by their principals and their peers as unmotivated and some are simply referred to as `lazy'. While one does not want to over-generalise, and while it is certainly true that the majority of primary teachers do not fit these descriptions, it is nevertheless also true that low levels of teacher motivation have frequently been noted as a problem in educational research around the country.

Linked to this is another problem frequently articulated by some principals, HoD's and teachers on a national basis; that SADTU is encouraging an environment of low commitment and lack of accountability on the part of classroom teachers, and that they are supported in this by ex-SADTU activists in the DoE. The destruction of the hated system of regular school inspection, and the delay in agreeing and implementing a system to replace it, has left teachers, in the words of a District official, `working unsupervised'. On the other hand, many school managers find that SADTU makes positive contributions to teacher discipline in areas like drunkenness and other gross dereliction's of duty through the establishment of a jointly agreed code-of-conduct and disciplinary process. The educational and managerial problem amounts to the need to establish an effective system for monitoring and improving the quality of instruction provided by teachers in the classroom. Many principals are faced with staff members who feel that the minimum requirements of duty are enough; they do accept that they can be monitored insofar as being in class and presenting a lesson that is part of a year plan is concerned, but an attempt to monitor and comment on quality is too frequently condemned as `inspection', and is not permitted by teachers and, they assert, SADTU.

Whatever the cause may be, at present there is little doubt that the internal level of classroom monitoring of teachers is very low and, where it does exist, is limited to bureaucratic management, rather than quality control and improvement. It is to be hoped that the new teacher assessment system of the GDE proves effective in reversing this situation.

Without a greater degree of co-operation and alignment between the different members of a school community, many schools resemble rowing boats in which half the passengers are not rowing at all, and the other half are rowing in different directions.

4. Security
Security is a problem for very many South African schools and all of the EQUIP schools have the issue first on their developmental priorities. Theft and vandalism is common, especially for schools near informal shack settlements, and literally anything can be stolen. The phenomenon is severely retarding the accumulation of resources in schools and, frequently, nullifying the efforts made by school communities to purchase resources with scarce internal funds. Items mentioned as stolen this year in the EQUIP schools alone include things like; computers, photocopy and fax machines, sports, catering and gardening equipment, though doors, windows, electrical wiring, furniture and roofing are also among the items that are vulnerable to theft. In addition, the vandalism of classrooms that frequently accompanies theft means that some of the schools have to remove important items like box libraries and Science kits from the classrooms each night for storage in a protected room. The thieves are remarkably persistent, avoiding an alarm system and breaking through robust bars to steal a computer and a fax machine at School W in late-November, for example, a task that must have required considerable skill, time and strength.

It is impossible to exaggerate how de-motivating and discouraging constant theft from schools can be, and how urgently an elimination of the problem is required.

5. Loss of Instructional Time

The loss of instructional classroom time for pupils, occasioned by a host of factors, has been receiving increased attention from researchers and Education Departments alike. In current research by ESA in another province and project, principals of 38 rural primary schools were asked to work out the theoretical versus actual days of instruction in one year (1997). The results were astounding and are summarised in the table below.

Days in the year	365
Minus holidays	175
Possible tuition days	**190**
Less:	
Registration	10
Exams:	60
End-of-term	15
*Others	45
Total days lost	**130**
Actual tuition days	**60**

"'Others: Pay day, preparation and holding of special events [e.g. sports, choirs, and memorials], strikes, staff, parent, union and departmental meetings, and community events.
"Note: The calculations do not include additional personal causes of time last. These were nominated as; sickness, personal business, study and exam leave, lateness, early leaving, INSET and floods.

Of course, these figures are meant to be illustrative rather than definitive but they make the point very well; that there is, by any standards, an unacceptably high level of loss of instructional time. The situation, further, prevails most strongly in formerly black schools. In the same study, a similar exercise for a local ex-Model C school, now entirely integrated, yielded a total of 163 actual tuition days.

It is also true that these figures do not come from Gauteng, but few would dispute that a similar situation prevailed in the past and still does in many schools, even if the scale is open to dispute.

6. Resources

Schools nationally are arguing that they do not receive sufficient resources from their respective education departments. The book allocation received by Gauteng schools was largely spent at one or two levels with minimal `topping up' of existing resources at other levels. As a consequence, many of the schools no longer have full class sets of important text books and have insufficient quantities of new ones. This cannot always be realistically laid at the door of the department alone; many pupils, for example, do not return books at the end of each year, but the issue is very serious indeed.

Under-skilled teachers, especially those who are unsure of the content of the subject they are teaching, rely upon text books to a much higher degree than others. When these teachers are also using new and unfamiliar methodologies, lessons can be stripped of

almost all meaningful content and trivial activity substituted for direct classroom instruction.

7. Fees and School Funds

The majority of South African schools do not collect all of their fees, which are generally very low (around R50 pa in urban areas is reasonably representative) in the first place. Consequently they are not able to purchase extra books and other materials on any significant scale. Principals do not feel they can take action on the issue because parents argue that "President Mandela has said that school is free, and that no child can be excluded from school because his parents do not pay school fees ". In some cases, these parents accuse school management of "raising money for themselves ". On the other hand, principals and teachers often point to particular parents who would not pay school fees in the township, but who pay much more to send their child to an ex-Model C school.

Part of the problem is, of course, the perceived low quality of education available at many township schools; those parents who can, will pay for education, when they feel that they are receiving quality.

8. Violence

Violence appears to be endemic in the area, and the safety of teachers and pupils is sometimes threatened. Taxi violence is common and during one incident near School X the teachers were forced to evacuate the school by a back gate to get the pupils out of the vicinity. Schools which are not located near taxi ranks, nevertheless find that many of their pupils cannot get to school when transport is disrupted, and when it is (more) dangerous to be in a taxi. One can only imagine the feeling of a parent hearing of taxi violence on a route used by their own children to get to school. In another example of violence in the environment, a meeting of a civic organisation at School Z in late November was disrupted by armed gunmen and one person killed.

Further, all of the nine Mamelodi EQUIP schools I visited during the third term were subject to fears of disruption by the "TuPac" gang. This gang reputedly specialises in the armed robbery of both primary and secondary schools, having gone so far at times as to enter classrooms and remove jewellery, watches and money from teachers and pupils alike. High School A, for example, had not commenced classes by nine a.m. on the day of a visit to the school; teachers and pupils had `received information' that the school had been singled out for attack on that particular day by the TuPac gang. Many of the pupils wanted to go in search of the culprits, some of whom are apparently known to the community. The following week there was also disruption at High School B where pupils, and those from surrounding schools, ended classes at noon to accompany police in search of members of TuPac.

Section III: Summary of Impact of EQUIP

1. Impact upon Provincial Policy
The GDE has adopted a policy that requires all its schools to produce their own School Development Plans through the establishment of an inclusive School Development Committee. In the District N2, the GDE has already provided initial training to 68 schools, based on the EQUIP model, and with the assistance of EQUIP.

However, the relationship is not a simple linear consequence of EQUIP. The situation, as I understand it, has its roots in the early discussions between MEC and the NBI, concerning the desirability of a project to explore school-based development combined with improved management. The situation has evolved from there to the present; EQUIP is, in this sense, a consequence - in the form of the pilot programme - of a GDE decision to explore methods of producing relevant school development plans.

On the other hand, the experiences and lessons learned through EQUIP by the organisations that have, in the first instance, implemented the project; the NBI and the CIE, have produced the system, process, structures and materials that constitute delivering this particular model of school development. In this sense, they have produced what was required - the knowledge and experience needed to make the model work on a larger scale. The GDE would do well to ensure it learns what they have learned.

In my view, EQUIP is a very good example of the interactions, and some of the difficulties, that go into the making and development of a partnership with the State (See item 1.1. below). The evolution of an idea into a functioning system - which has had significant observable effects on the schools - has been achieved; to the mutual enrichment of the NBI and the GDE. The information available to this research suggests that the expansion of the programme is certainly desirable, whatever any other emphases there may be in school development.

The experience of the past, especially that gained in the big 'One-size-fits-all' projects, suggests that the active participation of schools in their own development is the only way to ensure that any development is relevant to each schools' specific context and needs. The logical inference is that it is also the only way to achieve cost-effectiveness in school development. Finally, the evidence shows that the EQUIP process leads to an increased alignment of staff with each other and with school development.

1.1. Note on the Concept and Practice of Partnership
There appears to have been some tension between differing conceptions of the nature of the partnership model represented by EQUIP. Is EQUIP a NBI Project, directed and operated through a partnership between the NBI and the GDE? Or, on the other hand, is it a GDE Project facilitated by the NBI? The difference may seem semantic but it does have some consequences.

• If it is a NBI Project, the role of the DoE, especially at District level, would seem to essentially consist of providing support to the project; through specific managerial

and monitoring attention paid to the nine pilot schools. Put rather too crudely perhaps; the GDE would be assisting the NBI to implement the project in this conception.

- If it is a GDE Project, EQUIP becomes one experiment, albeit an important one, in producing school development plans; a goal set for all schools by the GDE. In this case, the District is unlikely to pay more attention to the nine pilot schools than to the rest of the schools in the District. Put crudely again, in this conception the NBI is assisting the GDE to implement its own project - by accessing funding, resources and skills, and providing service delivery and monitoring, on behalf of the GDE.

As I understand it, differing conceptions were largely resolved at the level of the Provincial Board by explicitly characterising EQUIP as a support to the implementation of GDE policies; it was to be aligned with and complementary to the policies of the GDE. The actual direct service provider, the CIE, thus becomes, in this context, almost an element of the GDE delivery system and, indeed, the decision was made to appoint a District staff member to visit and monitor schools along with the CIE. The intention is clearly to ensure that the EQUIP project is being integrated with the GDE's own programmes - a desirable outcome for all participants.

In practice, however, the resolution is not always as clear at District level. The following is an extract from the joint CIE/District annual EQUIP report, dated 13 November, 1998.

"Objective Three: To optimise the capacity of the GDE to implement EQUIP in conjunction with District Officials.

What was achieved: An attempt was made to align our plans at several meetings. The result was the involvement of the CIE to train District officials to run the EMD... (INSET) ... in the District in line with the EQUIP framework... (CIE presented train-the-trainer workshops in the District) ... The CIE also formed part of the training team that cascaded this training to 68 schools in the District... (The CIE were invited to attend two internal District meetings, a facilitator's workshop and an assessment of teachers workshop)

What was not achieved and why: It was difficult to align our timing of visits with the District because of their own priorities. The changing roles at the District have also resulted in confusion around whom to liase with. There have also been communication difficulties as the CIE was expected to be helping with workshops but were not part of the planning and were not given information about the time and venue. Joint planning was also difficult because of the different priorities of the two teams. "

It must be noted that there is a significant development mentioned in this report. The involvement of the CIE in training GDE officials to provide INSET to schools, and the subsequent INSET provided to 68 schools, is important; it represents direct involvement in, and support to, a GDE programme aimed at all of its schools on a routine basis.. However it is clear that, consciously or not, the District sometimes sees EQUIP as an external project imposed on a pre-existing GDE plan for training. In effect, the

partnership consists largely of allowing CIE to run EQUIP in the nine schools. The same report notes that:

> "There was no joint monitoring of programmes with the District because the District NZ has too many schools to attend to and too few personnel. "

The CIE has visited all of the schools twice a month on a routine basis and, in addition, ad hoc visits take place as required/requested. On the other hand, none of the reports made available to the research mention District visits or monitoring of EQUIP (though they may have taken place for other reasons). In general, my impression is that, according to the schools themselves, the bulk of District visits to schools are targeted on solving a specific problem of one kind or another.

The issue of monitoring and school-level feedback has also been raised in relation to the cascade training mentioned above. The CIE has pointed out that without some kind of local-level support INSET is seldom effective and this assertion is amply supported by research around the country. The point has been accepted in principle by all parties concerned from the beginning, and they plan to establish a joint GDE/CIE monitoring programme. However, if the District cannot monitor the existing nine schools because of the many other demands made on a relatively small staff with many schools to manage and support, it is difficult to see how they will be able to do so in a further 68 schools. Whatever form of practical partnership that finally solidifies in the expansion process, it is clear that the project should include school monitoring and facilitation as part of the routine job description of the District officials concerned. Only when these sorts of programmes are absorbed into the routine line and managerial functioning of the education department will real integration be achieved. As long as they remain `special projects' they drop to the bottom of the priority lists of district officials - and one can hardly blame them.

Ultimately, the GDE is responsible for the schools and the Provincial Board has taken the view, correctly in my opinion, that it is GDE policy which should drive partnerships designed to enhance school quality. However, it is at District level that capacity to actually manage, monitor and support the schools is limited and, unless this capacity is increased, it is at this level that outcomes at larger scales can fail to match policies based on successful small-scale pilots; especially if the success of the small scale pilot was heavily dependent on an NGO to provide school and classroom level monitoring and support.

2. Improved Alignment of Staff
There can be little doubt that the most evident, and most important, impact of EQUIP in the four schools has been an increased alignment of staff with management, and with each other, around the development of the school. Without this alignment, many other developmental initiatives have lost impetus and achieved minimal impact.

- The process of discussing and drawing up the vision and mission statements helped create a sense of focus in the schools. Individual perceptions and opinions about

? obstructions to achieving quality were subjected to a social process, facilitated and mediated by a constructive external agency, to produce a greater feeling of shared developmental aims.

? The process of drawing up the school development plan helped to define each developmental aim in terms of achievable goals. Producing a three-year implementation plan for each goal helped define the actions which the school would take in order to achieve each goal. All of this creates greater realism in setting goals and in accepting personal responsibilities and, hence, increases the possibility of success.

? The establishment and functioning of the School Development Committees and its associated sub-committees, the taking and reviewing of minutes, and the external `critical friend' influence of the CIE, helped create a sense of mutual and personal accountability by `publicly' structuring the responsibilities of participants. Essentially, membership of development committees*, run on a formal basis, improves teacher responsibility by spreading the concept of accountability to legitimate authority beyond school management alone.

None of the schools would argue that all of these outcomes have been uniformly achieved in relation to all of the staff, but all of the schools do assert that they have achieved significant progress toward all of them, and that internal conflict has significantly declined in the schools as a result. Further, the levels of participation, alignment and motivation of all the different elements of the school community improve as the development plans themselves bear fruit. Given sufficient funding, continued implementation of the development plans will further accelerate what is becoming a self-sustaining process.

There is no doubt that the role of the CIE has been very important; in helping create a sense of `where schools were going', and in providing support and feedback on a `critical friend' basis. More prosaically, perhaps, they have helped schools to keep focus on short term responsibilities, as well as longer term goals.

*Note on Committees

There are 3 sub-committees which report to the School Development Committee; Pupil Development, HR Development and Physical Needs. This structure has helped draw most of the staff into the process and diminish the `us and them' problem that can arise if only a few teachers are directly involved with development work. Although the proliferation of committees is typically a substitute for meaningful activity, in this case it does create more opportunities to increase participation and decrease the negative cynicism of the uninvolved. As I understand it, the decision to extend the SDC was suggested by the CIE as a means of dealing with just these issues, if so, it was a success.

3. School Security
The first thing all the schools have done is to improve their security. Brick perimeter walls, rather than wire fences, are favoured; i£ schools are forced to retain the wire fence they top it with razor-wire. Secondly, at least one room is made secure, through serious

steel grills and an alarm system if possible, for storage of particularly vulnerable items like photocopy machines.

Given the insecurity of the environment in which urban township schools exist, this is an obvious and very sensible thing to do if you hope to accumulate resources and equipment. However, no other project of which I am aware has ever started a development project by improving school security; this is surely a good example of the effect of local school-based development planning.

4. Educational Facilities

The next most common developmental priority for schools after security is the acquisition of the educational facilities that have become basic in ex-Model C schools; copying facilities, computers, fax and video machines, libraries (more often called media centres), laboratories or Sciences kits, books, teaching aids and so on.

While the drive to accumulate physical items and resources is derided in some quarters as an expensive form of imitation, I cannot ultimately agree. Schools need some items which have become as standard to quality education as blackboard chalk - especially as the focus of the curriculum shifts from the use of one standard text to teacher-designed learning programmes, and from conventional `transmission' to `learner-centred' methodologies. Whether it is always possible to afford these items is another matter, but the desire or intention to procure them is educationally rational behaviour.

5. Use of Instructional Time

Probably the single most striking feature of the senior researchers' visits was the continuation of normal schooling over periods when many schools are effectively closed for instruction. By mid-November, teachers and pupils were still in class and conducting normal lessons. In the absence of a control sample, it is difficult to know how general this was in Mamelodi over November, but the number of uniformed pupils wandering around the township at, for example, 11am on the same days seemed to indicate that it was unusual. (Many schools write tests/exams in the morning, after which pupils are released for the rest of day.) The EQUIP schools were all aware of the issue of wasted time over the November period, and all had made a conscious effort to improve the situation; School X, for example, schedules tests only after the mid- morning break, and School Z schedules their tests as late as possible in the month.

It should be noted that the dates the District GDE set for tests and exams in primaries, between the 18`h and the 27`h November, were very well chosen. This is good example of how positive decision making at Departmental level supports the efforts of local school management; by providing a `lever' for local management to implement more effective school routines. EQUIP had not so much initiated the concept of controlling the end-of-year time wastage problem; that had already been done by the District GDE through one simple well-chosen decision; has made it more likely that local management would be able to recognise and respond to the intention of the decision.

The fact that pupils, both secondary and primary could be seen in numbers around Mamelodi while the EQUIP schools were still routinely functioning, supports the perception. As does the fact that the schools continued routine lessons at other `low' periods; specifically the beginning and end of the third term, and the commencement of the fourth.

6. Quality of instruction in the classroom

In terms of the quality of instruction in the classroom, little can as yet be directly ascribed to EQUIP. Most of the time and attention of staff has been dedicated to the social process of developing the development plan through the new committees.
Implementation of these plans is still at a very early stage and has largely been limited to the provision of security and acquiring educational facilities.

It is over the next few years, as the development plans are progressively implemented, that we can expect to see impact on pupil achievement - if the EQUIP model for school development is, indeed, effective. In the current three-year national EQUIP evaluation, pre-tests will be administered in February/March 1999, and final post tests in November 2001. The EQUIP schools on which this report is based were pre-tested in late-October 1998; although there are, as yet, no plans to post test these schools, the pre-test dates are close enough to use the control sample for the national evaluation against which to compare them.

7. Teacher Development

All of the references to teacher development in the school plans refer to methodology or to things like classroom management, or use of teaching aids, etc. None of them refer to improving teacher subject/content knowledge. Indeed, only two of the 50 EQUIP pilot schools have nominated subject knowledge as a focus of teacher development - both in KZN. This is, perhaps, surprising.

8. Attendance

The need for regular attendance of both teachers and pupils may be self evident, but it is not always recognised. In all of the EQUIP schools, attendance of teachers is reasonably good. No teachers were absent on 55% of visits, and on the other 45% of visits one to two teachers were absent. Mid-October sees a general increase of teacher absenteeism as Vista and Unisa examinations take place - to around four absent per day. Other than the October period, this level of absenteeism is not enough to seriously disrupt the educational programmes of the schools. However, it does represent another contribution to the overall loss of educational time, and it could surely be reduced. Nonetheless, by the standards of large parts of the country, teacher attendance is probably a little above average. Pupil attendance is generally very good. Three of the schools have an average attendance level of 97% and above. The sole exception is School X at 89%; this is almost certainly due to the lower socio-economic status of many of the pupils at the school.

Note on Hours of Class Contact and Class Sizes

Classroom teachers, at all of the schools, are averaging between 20 and 25 hours direct class contact per week. Further, the schools have a mean of 35 pupils per teacher, compared to an actual mean of 38 pupils per class. All of these figures compare very favourably with those obtaining in the past where low hours of class contact time and, consequently, large classes were the norm. Figures comparable to these are being obtained all over the country - clear evidence that State policies of 'right-sizing' have had positive effect. While this is not an impact of EQUIP, it is an important confirmation that state policies are impacting at school level.

Section IV: The Schools

Despite a few differences, the four schools are essentially very similar, and their School Development Plans show many more similarities than differences. This is not especially surprising; three of them are even reasonably close together. They share many of the problems and contexts of all urban township schools. The fact that their internal conditions, changes in these conditions subsequent to the initiation of EQUIP, and their development plans are so similar provides an illustration of what most schools in Mamelodi would do; if they were given the opportunity to dictate their own development.

Table One: General school data

Name	Stf	Tchrs	Pls	Facs(6)	Pls(10)	Tchrs(6)	Mngmt(14)	Plcy(10)	Prnts(6)	Order(4)	Maintn(12)	Env(8)
School Y	19	16	566	4	5	4	11	4	4	3	6	3
School Z	24	22	844	6	8	5	13	5	4	3	8	6
School W	22	17	530	6	8	5	13	5	4	3	6	5
School X	20	18	590	5	8	5	13	5	6	3	6	3

0

Key to column headings

Stf	Staff	Facs	Facilities	Prnts	Parent records
Tchrs	Teachers	Mngmt	Management records	Order	School order
Pls	Pupils	Plcy	Policy documents	Maintn	School maintenance

Comments:
? Facilities were listed as copying facility, store room, library/box libraries, laboratory/Science kits, TV/Video system and security (fencing or watchman). Many of these items have been acquired through contact with EQUIP.

? Records (Pls to Prnts) were scored two for yes, one for informal, and zero for no. The relatively high degree of record-keeping reflects, to some extent, the effect of EQUIP. In some cases, the principal was already aware of the importance of record keeping and EQUIP helped develop the system he/she had adopted. In other cases, EQUIP introduced and facilitated considerable extensions to the record-keeping system. The process is not yet complete.

? Maintenance was based on six items; litter, buildings, furniture, toilets, grounds, and materials. Scored on a five point scale from +2 to -2. These were all relatively high scores; it is evident that attention paid the to improvement of the school grounds and to the provision of perimeter security in development plans, together with the employment of gardeners and cleaners by the GDE and the SGB, is having a positive effect.

? Environment was based on four items; colour/displays/posters in classrooms, displays of pupils' work, school order/discipline, positive attitudes/pupil care. Scored +2 to-2 on a five-point scale. The scores are, again, relatively good but it is difficult to ascribe them to EQUIP specifically, other than the generalised effects of a more aligned staff. This is probably a factor in those schools which visit pupils at home, seek out truants, etc. Many of the classrooms have materials and/or books, posters and charts from READ; the organisation has worked extensively in Mamelodi and is still involved with three of the schools. It should also be noted in this regard that principals at READ schools also receive a management training programme. The next most visible materials from an external source in the four schools were SEP Science kits.

1. School X

Opened in 1966, School X is one of the older schools in Mamelodi and was built according to the standard DET design of the time. The buildings, though old, are adequate; there are sufficient classrooms [16] for the pupil enrolment, a basic toilet block and a two-office administration block. It is situated in a busy area of Mamelodi with a shopping centre across the road, an adjacent high school, near taxi ranks and four shebeens. Although the grounds are used as a thoroughfare by pedestrians (the wire perimeter fence has been breached in several places), there is relatively little litter and the grounds themselves are maintained as well as can be expected for such a `busy' area. Formal records are largely complete; especially pupil, teacher and management records. Classrooms are reasonably well maintained, but there are few posters and other wall charts; what there is comes largely from READ. Pupils work is displayed, especially in junior primary classrooms but infrequently and, it would appear, equally infrequently changed. An insecure environment, including vandalism, has contributed to this situation. Parent participation is relatively good in terms of those who do participate, though they are still a small percentage of the total parent body.

The pupil enrolment is 590 with 20 staff, of whom 18 are classroom teachers. All of the teachers have a weekly class contact load between 20 and 25 hours. The principal, estimates that around 55% of the pupils live with grandparents reliant on pensions, and that around 60% of the remainder live in unemployed households. About 40% of them live in informal settlements or backyard 'zozos'. Children of middle class parents have emigrated to other, usually ex-Model C, schools.

School X has all the basic facilities; phone, fax, electricity and running water, as well as educational equipment like copying facilities, Science kits, box libraries, a video and monitor, and 10 computers. The school has received OBE materials and INSET for Grade 1 and 2 teachers and other text books and stationery from the GDE in the last two years, though 'not enough'. READ was involved with the school for some time providing box libraries and other materials, as well as INSET, to teachers. Contact with the Deutsche School has resulted in assistance to Maths and English teachers in Grade 5. Materials in usage are generally stored in cupboards in classrooms and the rest in a store room. They are maintained to varying degrees but are kept available to pupils and teachers.

All of the visits found the school busy, organised and functioning normally. Attendance of teachers is good, though at least one was absent on almost half of the visits. The pupils have a slightly lower attendance rate than those at the other schools, almost certainly due to their lower socio-economic, and hence less stable, environment. This certainly contributes to a related phenomenon; many pupils from poorer families do not bring food to school, they go home to eat at break and return in a staggered stream up to half an hour after the end of break. There is a reasonably high degree of pupil discipline and order, and evidence of pupil care - sick pupils have been accompanied home, attention given to children beaten at home and interviews with the parents of pupils with problems have all been observed during the course of the research.

School X has made a serious effort to increase instructional time.
? A parent communication book is kept in which late-coming and absenteeism is recorded; at a certain point parents are asked to come to discuss the issue.
? Pupils remain in their classes and teachers circulate in an effort to maximise available instructional time.
? All tests are held after mid-morning break to ensure that pupils remain at school for the whole day.

The school combines its own funds and prizes from competitions with those received through EQUIP; an extra computer was won by a teacher in a Pick-n-Pay competition and the SDC purchased a printer from internal funds. The secured computer room is used to store a photocopier purchased from school funds, and the school has successfully negotiated for extra computers for what will become a separate media-centre. They have also purchased a video machine to accompany a television set won in a competition. Fundraising at the school has evidently increased through their involvement with EQUIP, though the payment of school fees remains a problem. The Vice Principal says that it is her job to educate the parents; she `speaks strongly' to them both about school fees and extra expenses. She says that they will pay up to R200 a month to get their child into a ex-Model-C school but not pay the R50 p.a. fee at School X. They are, however, getting better and "with pressure" over 90% may pay this year. She says the "culture of non payment is a matter of attitude -parents see local schools as inferior and anyway, were told that schooling is free". Events to raise funds are held throughout the year, like Casual Day where pupils pay R1 to wear `casuals' and film shows. Parents are happy to pay for outings in particular and will quickly `pop out R10 for the bus ". Staff and pupils collect enormous piles of discarded tin cans for cash redemption for recycling.

In 1998, the school received 6 computers from Unilever, through the NBI, and used their grant of R10 000 from EQUIP to secure the new computer room (a school report proudly declares that "The room would now be the envy of Fort Knox'), and commence construction of a brick wall to replace the inadequate wire fence that surrounds the school. Security in general, and this wall in particular, has received the highest priority in their development plans. One of the biggest problems of the school is disruption because of its position in Mamelodi. Shops in the centre opposite the school advertise their existence through giant speakers blasting music all day; the taxi rank next to the shops

was the scene of the last shootings - the pupils had to be evacuated through a back entrance; there are four shebeens visible from the school with their own quota of noise and drunkenness; there are three high schools around the school, one of which is adjacent. All of these lead to disruptions either through noise, marches, violence or just interference with the school day in some way, like high school pupils shouting at the pupils through the fence and kicking up a racket when they should be in classes. They seem `completely undisciplined and unsupervised' said one of the teachers. The wire fence has been breached at various points to allow the passage of pedestrians at all hours. Theft and vandalism has been a constant problem.

The principal and staff appear to be reasonably well aligned with each other and with the goals of the development process, but it is clear that this was not always so. According to school management and to most of the teachers, the EQUIP process has helped improve internal school communication between management, parents, teachers and pupils. It has had a significant influence in terms of bringing the staff together and developing positive attitudes to the school and authority. Up to the beginning of this year, relations between school management and other staff, and between different groups within the staff, were very difficult. This reached the point that some teachers attempted to enlist the aid of SADTU to drive the principal from the school; accusing him to the parent body of misuse of school funds. The principal, rather than protest to the GDE or resign, decided to try to change these attitudes. He asked the EDC, to allow his school to be a part of the EQUIP programme, and was invited to attend the first meeting held.

Participation in structured committees with responsibility for school development has lessened the tension that used to exist. Some of the most critical staff members are now working positively in committees and are supportive of the overall EQUIP programme. All of the staff has attended all of the workshops, many of them on Saturdays, and the principal feels that their current positive attitudes result from them beginning to realize that they have a role to play in the school. EQUIP has "neutralised the situation" and that " people take long to change and they fear change - they need to work at it ". Workshops attended by staff from the school over 1998 are nominated as:
• Team building
• Holding staff meetings
• Staff management
• Use of teaching aids
• Developing a code-of-conduct.

The CIE is a popular facilitator, they visit schools regularly, make suggestions, and offer advice and support but `they don't push'.

The developmental priorities of the school are described in the approved School Development Plan.

I.   Improve the security of the school
•   complete the security wall
II. Develop a more effective teaching and learning
?   conduct workshops for teacher development

- improve school discipline
III. Increase fund raising
- develop a finance plan
IV. Build an administration block
- build a staff room as part of an administration block
- build staff toilets and office
- provide sick-bay

Three of the developmental priorities have received some attention, the exception being the building of an administration block; the decision to develop a media/computer centre will almost certainly put this item back a long time.

The early focus of school development has been on security and the accumulation of teaching aids and resources. Security is, as we have seen, essential to secure items like computers, television sets, and video, fax and photocopy machines; items which are all commonplace in the schools which achieve quality pupil outcomes. The kind of schools, it should be added, to which most teachers send their own children.

In all, the development plan which has been produced by a previously fractured staff is relevant and targeted on sensible initiatives. The teachers are now far more involved with the process and all endorse it, especially as it begins to bear visual fruit in the form of facilities, resources and security. The school has made a real effort to expand its funding base though it is still essentially dependent on EQUIP for larger sums. Given a continuing source of funds it is likely that School X will, indeed, complete its SDP; there can be no doubt that when it does, it will be a better school.

EQUIP, and the CIE in particular, has evidently made a significant difference to this school; the principal remarked that he feared to talk about it in case he said something that resulted in its withdrawal. In my view, the most significant achievement of the programme at School X has been to improve and structure the internal alignment of the people who work there. Without this alignment, and its associated social structures, all developmental initiatives are doomed to failure, with it they have a real chance of succeeding. The CIE confirms that conditions at the school were poor before the programme started, and that it is one of the schools that have achieved most through the EQUIP process.

2. School W
Opened in 1972, School W is an attractive and well kept school in an old red brick building with a new classroom block to the back of the school. Gardens between blocks, in front of the office, and the grounds in general, are clean and generally free of litter (windy days can deposit litter all over the grounds). The buildings are also well maintained with spotless passages and classrooms; the school employs a cleaner with school funds, and also has a gardener and a caretaker. The one exception is the pupil toilet block which is in a poor condition.

School W, as part of its development plan, has decided to allow local unemployed people to grow food on the school grounds. Rent is not charged and the produce is not sold for profit. The intention is provide support to the poorest members of the community surrounding the school. The food gardens flank two sides of the school and are evidently both well cared for and productive. Some of the produce is given to the school for its own internal `feeding scheme' for indigent pupils. A school report about this project reads:

> "In an attempt to achieve a `whole person' as well as developing a positive school environment, the school has decided to re-organise its grounds... (unemployed parents approached the committee tasked with developing the school grounds) ...and asked if the school would not allocate some of the ground to them for planting crops. The school received a donation of seeds from Plant Care and allocated land and seeds to unemployed parents... they have planted cabbages, spinach, green beans, carrots and peas...they collect the water that the children use to wash their hands to feed their plants... in return for this they give a portion of their vegetables to the school (for the indigent children's lunch scheme) ... in this way both the parents and the school benefit from each other. A parent ... said 'I can now put some fresh food on my table at least two to three times a week'. The project group plans to expand this with the help of EQUIP funds as well as getting other funders involved... the skills learnt with EQUIP have given them confidence to embark on such projects ".

Formal records are largely complete; especially pupil, teacher and management records and they are stored in a logical and accessible fashion The classrooms have few broken windows, and a real effort has been made to make them brighter and more colourful, especially in the junior primary section; all these rooms had posters and charts up on the walls, again many of them from READ, and pupils' work was displayed on the walls. Like all of the other schools, parent participation is relatively good in terms of those who do participate, thought they are a still a small percentage of the total parent body.

Pupil enrolment is 530 with 22 staff of whom 17 are classroom teachers. Teachers' class contact loads vary between 20 and 25 hours per week. The school is situated in a less disruptive area than School X and its school community is also relatively more stable; a `few' pupils live with grandparents and in shack settlements, though there is a high unemployment rate. Violence, theft and vandalism still occurs, and the streets around the school are `not always safe' for pupils. Although taxi wars do not occur near the school, around 30% of the pupils use taxis to get to school and are inevitably absent when taxi services are disrupted. There has been some emigration o£ pupils to ex-Model c schools but, on the other hand, there has also been internal immigration into the school. School W is generally perceived to be a `good' school, and has attracted pupils from surrounding areas; witness the high percentage who rely on taxis to reach school.

School W has all the basic facilities; phone, fax, electricity and running water, as well as equipment like copying facilities, box libraries and a computer/media centre, with 8 workstations, audio language cassettes and typewriters. They do not, however, have Science kits for junior grades. Like the other schools, School W has received OBE materials for grade one and stationery for all pupils, but have `inadequate' numbers of

text books. The school has had a long-term involvement with READ, funded by the IDT, and has received all of their primary materials. The presence of the organisation in the school is evident; box libraries, book packs and other learning materials, posters, Readathon certificates and reading lists are all visible in the classrooms. The principal has established contact with La Montague Primary, an ex-Model C attended by his own children. The principals of the two schools intend to develop the contact further. Existing resources are kept in a resource room adjacent to the office (a converted classroom) and used as appropriate - they are well organised and my impression was that they are kept in regular use.

Teacher attendance is, like the other schools, reasonably good with one or two absent on around half of the visits. Pupil attendance is excellent; on one visit, a teacher had left the school to look for a truant child; teachers mark the attendance register when school starts and know the pupil numbers by 8 am. If any are absent without reason, a teacher is allocated to look for the truants. The pupils know the system will be enforced and the absentee level is therefore very low. Pupils who come late to school without reason are punished - made to stay after school to do gardening or school work. Another of the visits by a senior researcher on the day before school closed for the third term, found the school functioning as normal, including the provision of routine classroom instruction, up to I 1 am. After this, an EQUIP workshop had been arranged for the whole staff and one teacher was allocated to look after the pupils until they were dismissed at 12h00. The pattern was repeated at other periods and the school plainly makes good use of instructional time.

Order, discipline and pupil care is taken seriously at the school; including the identification of pupils with behaviour and other problems. The pupils are bright and cheerful and happy to talk to visitors, and all of them wear the required full school uniform. Produce from the food garden helps the school's own `feeding scheme' in which lunch is provided to indigent children.

School W has established the SDC and its associated sub-committees are functioning well. Once again, school, EQUIP and GDE funds are combined to support the SDP. The school received an eight-workstation computer centre from IBM in 1987. They dis-invested and the school is no longer sponsored by IBM. The GDE pays two teachers the salaries of administration clerks to run the centre but may stop this from next year. There are also typewriters and language cassettes in the centre. The language programme is targeted at groups of 40 pupils at Grade 3 level; teachers say that there has been a great improvement in their English literacy. The first EQUIP grant went to the purchase of a video machine and television set, and subsequent grants to purchase a photocopier, two white boards, four audio tape players and Science kits for grades 5 to 7. Part of the school grounds is currently being covered with topsoil, preparatory to the development of a soccer field. In all, the school has contributed R13 000 of the total R20 200 expenditure on development from school funds and special fundraising.

Fundraising has received a lot of attention; film days are presented, in conjunction with a cinema in Bronkhorstspruit, on which different films are shown in different classrooms.

Parents, pupils and members of the local community pay R20 for the day, the school receiving R7 per ticket. Cans are collected for recycling and tuck shop run for pupils. Fees are set at R50 p.a. and `about' 80% pay without problem - a reflection of the perceived quality of School W.

Once again, security is the highest priority of the school; the office and storeroom were secured after thieves came in through the roof. Nevertheless, theft of a computer and a fax machine from the heavily secured room, with an alarm, occurred in November. This is real illustration of just how difficult it is to retain property in the environment; even after the school took significant steps to make at least one room secure, a major theft was still possible. Further security measures that are planned are the repair of the perimeter fence with razor wire added, and the establishment of security controls at the gate. These measures will improve the security of the grounds and the pupils during the day, but one has to wonders what would be effective at night, given the obstacles that thieves have already surmounted. It is impossible to exaggerate how de-motivating and discouraging constant theft from schools can be, and how urgently an elimination of the problem is required.

There is evidently a reasonable degree of alignment between different members of staff and between staff and school management. The school was fortunate in being able to largely avoid polarisation during the struggle years when the school remained open for normal schooling as much as possible. During this period a school culture appears to have been established in which staff agreed to put aside personal and political differences at school. This did not always work but a determined neutrality on behalf of school management, combined with an insistence on performing professional duties `for the sake of the pupils " appears to have been responsible. What has not yet changed is the willingness of all teachers to personally commit their time and energy to the development process "many talk and think a lot, but some don't do much ". Too much of the work lands on school management and it is difficult to assert managerial authority when issues other than direct duty are concerned.

The EQUIP process has helped alter this situation; partly by assisting in the articulation of new goals, and partly by structuring participation through committees in achieving these goals. Participating in the process of setting new goals improves teacher motivation, by allowing them to articulate problems and solutions to problems. Participating in the development committees improves teacher responsibility by spreading the concept of accountability beyond the school management. "Changing attitudes is a matter of changing habits ".

Workshops attended by staff from the school are nominated as:
? Vision and mission
? Strategic planning
? Fundraising
? Financial management
? Lesson planning
? Team work

?   Conflict management

The presence of the CIE has helped the school a great deal in providing an external perspective and motivating force to the whole school community "They set challenges and they help you to achieve them ".

The developmental priorities of the school are described in the approved School Development Plan.

I.   Improve security of the school and procure equipment
?   construct a security fence
?   procure equipment and resources (intercom, sports equipment, PA system)
II. Improve effectiveness of teaching and learning
?   develop staff in effective teaching methods
?   improve school discipline
III. Improve relationships among stakeholders
?   build co-operation and teamwork between staff, parents and other stakeholders
IV. Build an administration block.

As a consequence of the combination of continued theft and high building costs, the SDC decided to defer the administration block in favour of further securing the perimeter and the office/resource room.

All of the developmental priorities have received attention to some degree; the provision of security and the upgrading of the grounds in particular. The principal has prepared a costed fundraising proposal for the completion of the grounds project, and is seeking support for the food garden project mentioned above.

EQUIP has had a positive effect in School W, most importantly by helping to motivate and stimulate staff to commit themselves to school development. As in the other schools, the process has helped improve staff participation, especially as early initiatives come to completion. It has convinced many of the staff that it is possible to achieve change and has opened the environment to new ideas. Once again, the role of the CIE as an external `critical friend' has helped the school conceive, set and achieve goals.

3. School Z

School Z is the newest of the four schools and was opened in 1993. The present principal was appointed at the same time. The school is situated in the far eastern section of Mamelodi in a new, and evidently relatively affluent suburb with red clinker-brick houses and neat walled gardens, though there is squatter camp in the vicinity. The school is well-resourced with adequate classrooms, a library, laboratories, woodwork room, office block and staff room. The premises are very well kept and clean, no litter is evident in the grounds, there are no broken windows and no graffiti on walls. Toilets are clean and classrooms were neat and tidy. The pupils are all very neat and wear full school uniform. Formal records are largely complete. Classrooms are well maintained and, in the junior primary section they are decorated with colourful posters, charts, reading lists and pupils'

work. This is less so at senior primary level but in both cases the bulk of these materials, again, appears to come from READ. Although the school is in a more affluent area than the other three, it still suffers from theft, vandalism and violence. For example, armed gunmen entered a civic meeting at the school in late-November and killed one of the participants. Active parental involvement is limited to a smallish group of parents, probably a larger group than in the other schools, and their contribution is considerable, Attendance at parent meetings is `very good'.

Pupil enrolment is 844 with 24 staff, of whom 22 are classroom teachers who carry a teaching load of between 20 and 25 hours per week. Around 80% of the pupils come from the suburb in which the school is located while about 20% come from the squatter camp. Only a "few' live with pensioner grandparents and around 70% of parents are employed. The school has experienced a little emigration, but has attracted a lot of immigrants from surrounding schools - the school is perceived as being a `good' school'. School Z has all the basic facilities - phone, fax, copying facilities, electricity etc. though it is still in the process of acquiring Science kits and books for its central library. It has received a computer from the University of Pretoria, financial support from Metro Life, Telkom, Johnson Wax and SAB. Once again, the school has received sufficient stationers from the GDE and OBE materials for grade one, but the 'top-up' allocation of R31 000 for this year for text books was `inadequate' and the school does not have full class sets of many texts. There are two resource rooms, kept in good order, from which teachers and pupils can borrow books. Materials stored in classrooms are kept in cupboards and are also in reasonable condition.

The school was functioning normally on all visits. Attendance is, again, good; one or two teachers absent on about half of the visits and very good attendance by the pupils. There is a high degree of order and discipline in the school and plenty of evidence that pupils are well cared for. The principal has attempted to tackle the issue of increasing instructional time, banning, for example, the practice of marking in class. He intends, further, to require teachers next year to remain for some period after pupils go home "one step at a time!"

Marking in class is a perhaps inevitable but nonetheless perverse strategy some teachers have developed in response a decreased number of free periods due to `rightsizing.' They now have much less time to mark pupils' work during free periods and, rather than stay a school after the pupils go home to do so, simply mark during classes. This, of course, defeats the benefits won by actually getting teachers into classrooms for more hours each week. A typical example is the teacher who stops instruction ten minutes before the end of a 30 minute period to mark the work covered in the previous 20 minutes, or more likely 15 minutes considering the time required to get the pupils into classrooms and settled for instruction. So, although some of the teachers may technically be teaching up to 25 hours a week, an increase for some of them of up to 10 hours, the actual instructional time allowed to the pupils could have actually decreased.

School Z has established an SDC, and its associated sub-committees, and, like the other schools, combines its own funds with those received through EQUIP. The first R2 000 from EQUIP, for example, was combined with school funds and a donation from Metro Life, to purchase a fax and photocopier, as well as to install an alarm system in the administration block. The next EQUIP grant (R10 000) was spent on extra security grills and bars around the administration block as well as to pay for extra books and teachers' workshops.

Fundraising is evidently taken seriously at the school and the range of different companies supporting the school is testimony to their growing effectiveness. Fees are set at R100 p.a. and virtually all of the parents pay. This is clearly a reflection of the fact that many parents are more affluent than they are at other schools, but it also demonstrates quite clearly that parents will pay school fees when they believe they are receiving quality education for their children. It should be admitted that it was not easy to get to this situation; initially parents resisted fees because the state had told them that schooling was free. All of the members of the School Governing Body showed a parent meeting proof that they had paid their own fees for their children and argued that all parents should pay. This tactic proved effective and now the school is able to contribute to some extent to its own development from fees.

While the staff appear well aligned with each other and with school management in pursuit of the development plan, it is clear that this has been achieved with considerable effort. A report from the school reads in part;

> (Report describes achievements of the school in relation to the SDPJ "The above could not happen without hitches. The fact that School Z is involved in a project of re-establishing a culture that was destroyed some decades back is a problem. Again, the fact that drawing Development Plans that need skills, commitment, dedication and perseverance is a challenge of a great magnitude.

> Thus, like other project schools, School Z found it difficult to work according to its development plan. Some reasons are:
> a) Hesitation and doubt by some staff members
> b) b) Lack of skills
> c) District commitments and activities
> d) d) Lack of commitment

> The above and some other reasons need to be re-addressed with all stakeholders to indicate the importance of the project.

Like many other principals, he is faced with some staff members who feel that the minimum requirements of duty are enough. Like all the other principals in this study, and many others around the country, he still cannot monitor quality in the classroom. Teachers will accept that they can be monitored on insofar as being in class and presenting a lesson that is part of a year plan is concerned. Any attempt to monitor and comment on quality is resisted as `inspection'.

EQUIP has certainly helped the situation in essentially the same way as it has done so in other schools. The staff have a greater sense of purpose and goals for the school, and have been organised into impersonal committees where personal whims, grievances and negative attitudes are controlled. It has helped emphasise that teachers must work beyond their own political and union affiliations for the benefit of the pupils. All of this has helped motivate them to work more as a team, and to remain focussed on the task of development for the sake of the pupils.

The workshops attended by staff from the school are nominated as:
Team building
Fund raising
Conflict management
Financial management

The developmental priorities of the school are described in the approved School Development Plan.
I.   Improved security of the school
?   secure the administration block
?   improve entrance security
II. Staff development
?   assist staff in professional development and teaching methods
III. Effective teaching and learning
?   develop staff in effective teaching methods
?   improve school discipline
IV.Fund raising
?   develop a fundraising plan

It is a rather sad reflection of the seemingly inevitable nature of crime in this country that plans to install a remote controlled security gate at the entrance to the school were abandoned "because of fears that the motor that drives the gate would be soon stolen. " i.e. that the system designed to improve security would itself be stolen! As in all the other schools, the provision of security and the acquisition of basic educational facilities has absorbed the greatest part of the school's attention to date.

EQUIP has been welcomed at this school by both management and staff. Its primary impact thus far appears to be increased staff alignment and motivation.. The CIE is, again, a popular facilitator who provides a "sympathetic but demanding and supportive external influence".

4. School Y
School Y is, like School X, one of the older Mamelodi schools. They have sufficient classrooms, all of which are adequate, and an administration block. The school is located within one of the older suburbs and, although quieter and less disrupted than School X, still suffers from theft, violence and vandalism in the area. The school makes an effort to keep the grounds clean and free from litter but it is not easy in a densely populated community.

Formal records are not as complete as the other schools but the basics are in place, especially the essential school management records. The classrooms are kept clean and swept of dust and, at junior primary level, are brightly decorated and pupils' work is displayed. The senior primary rooms are less attractive but do have some posters, maps and charts on display. Parent participation seems to run at about the same level as the other schools. The school collects old clothes from parents to donate to the local hospice as its contribution to the community.

Pupil enrolment is 566 with 19 staff, of whom 17 are classroom teachers. The class contact load of the teachers is the same as the others - between 20 and 25 hours a week. Pupils come primarily from the surrounding community, but a sizeable minority live in shack settlements. `Many' live with pensioner grandparents and `more than half of the remainder come from unemployed families. Children of middle class families have emigrated to ex-Model C schools.

School Y has most of the basic facilities, and, like School X to some extent, most of them have been provided through the EQUIP programme. Like the other schools, School Y has been receiving adequate supplies of stationery, but has an inadequate stock of text books. READ was active in the school until 1992, but the school does not have box libraries, or Science kits. Existing materials are stored securely enough in the administration block but materials left in classrooms are subject to theft and vandalism. The school gets 20 copies of the Pretoria News per week to use as classroom resources; apparently the programme is open to all Mamelodi schools.

On all of the visits, this school was functioning normally with all classes at work. Attendance of both teachers and pupils is similar to the others; one or two teachers absent on about half of the visits and very good pupil attendance. The principal pays a lot of attention to pupil attendance because she says "loitering creates many problems and there are elements that cause havoc with children in our townships ". Both pupils and teachers are required to attend from the first to the last day of terms, and she has spoken to them often about the need to spend more time in class. Order and discipline at the school appears to be good and, equally, there appears to be a positive relationship between teachers and pupils. An outing to a cinema in Bronkhorstspruit was organised for the last day of term to "leave the children with a positive feeling about school". (The same cinema with which School W organises fund-raising days).

School Y used its first grant from EQUIP to purchase a second-hand photocopier and subsequently acquired a video machine, maps and geography and Science equipment. Their grant of R10 000 was largely spent on security for the classrooms. They plan to develop a media centre at the school and, at present, significant security is being installed for this room. The school has also received R IS 000 from Edgars which it has used to purchase a roneo machine, teaching aids/kits and a freezer.

The school makes an definite effort to raise funds itself. The freezer is used to store ice cream which is sold to pupils; Coca-Cola has provided a fridge for the sale of their products; the school hold fetes selling ice cream and cokes, food (a stove was purchased

from school funds) and clothes donated for the purpose; bottles are collected for recycling. Fees were R20 p.a. until 1997 but were increased by the SGB to R50 p.a. this year. `Most' parents pay their fees although the school management has to keep up the pressure to get them to do so. She believes that no serious action is possible against defaulters though she does threaten to withhold reports and this is `sometimes' effective. In their last workshop, the teachers decided that their fundraising was not `up to scratch' so this is the priority for next year. They will start the year with a workshop for parents to talk about finance. The principal says EQUIP encourages schools to involve parents, but they "need to be `educated".

The alignment of teachers and management, and between the teachers themselves, has been improved by participation in EQUIP. This is particularly noticeable in terms of the attitude of the teachers who the principal now feels are behind the programme. It has taken some time, and the workshops as well as the presence of the CIE has `really helped'. At first, the teachers feared that the programme was to be imposed on them but now they are convinced that they are not being coerced; therefore they are willing to participate. They have had to `change their mind-set and this always takes time'. While the situation is not yet perfect, the principal believes that the school has turned the comer, and that it will keep improving. Teachers have attended workshops on Saturdays, this alone indicates a great deal of acceptance of the programme "whereas before some were negative about it ".

There has also been some tension between the chairman of the SGB and the school management. The negative attitudes of some teachers `influenced him'. The conflict management workshop helped the situation and a subsequent meeting between the principal and the chairman appears to have resolved the situation.

Workshops attended by staff from the school are nominated as:
? Classroom Management
? Teacher-made materials
? Code-of-Conduct
? Conflict management
? Team building

The CIE has, again, been a popular facilitator, especially in providing an external perspective to internal school participants. "The CIE's way of doing things is very good and we all feel comfortable with them"

The developmental priorities of the school are described in the approved School Development Plan.

I. Improve security of the school
? erect a security fence around the school
? erect steel grills and install an alarm system in the administration block.
II Effective teaching and learning
? conduct workshops for teacher development
? improve school discipline

Ill. Fundraising
•   put a fundraising plan in place
IV. Media Centre
•   establish a media centre
•   furnish and equip the media centre

Once again, the primary attention of the school in terms of development has been devoted to the provision of security and the acquisition of the facilities that are seen as basic to schools.

The school has obviously benefited a great deal from its association with EQUIP, especially in terms, again, of improving communication and alignment. "Where we were rigid, we are now flexible. And many are no longer spectators but are participants ". The school is also very aware of the material benefits in terms of equipment and the principal remarked that overall "we have experienced such a vast change that 1 cannot put it in words. I don't want to think about what will happen when EQUIP ends, but we will try ".

<center>Section V: Pupil Impact</center>

Pupil tests were administered during the last week of October. This is a difficult period for schools, and they are to be thanked for the degree of preparation and organisation in all of them. In all, 45 pupils (15 at each of Grades 5, 6 and 7) at each school were tested in both (English) literacy and numeracy; the original intention to include a Science test proving impractical given the time available for testing in the midst of preparing for end-of-year tests/exams. This does not, in our view, significantly affect the utility of the results. Previous experience has shown that the results of the Science test are closely correlated with the results of both of the other tests, and especially with the literacy test. It is most unlikely, in other words, that we would measure a gain in the Science test without a corresponding gain in either, and probably both, other tests.

The tests were held in one classroom or hall with one teacher from the school assisting, if necessary, for translations for Grade 5 pupils. The tests were administered without incident, processed, and individual scores recorded in a computer data base.

Table Two: Pupil Test Scores

	Grade V		Grade VI		Grade VII	
	Literacy	Numeracy	Literacy	Numeracy	Literacy	Numeracy
School Z	68	47	74	53.5	82	73
School W	40	37	67	46	83	56
School X	52	39	63	50	71	60
School Y	40	39	57	44.5	72.5	58
Average %	50	40.5	65	48.5	77	62

Similar tests yielding compatible data have already been administered in 18 schools in Mpumalanga; and will be administered in a total of primary 38 schools in Gauteng, KZN,

Eastern and Western Cape Provinces by early 1999. There will, therefore, be a growing database against which to compare the performance of the PEI schools in

Table Three: Scores Obtained in 18 Mpumalanga Schools

	Literacy	Numeracy
Grade Five	31	38
Grade Six	45	46

While it is acknowledged that these are scores from differing contexts and intervention projects, it is immediately apparent that the Mamelodi schools have a much higher level of English Literacy; their scores are 34% and 32% higher at grades five and six respectively. This clearly reflects the urban nature of the schools, the Mpumalanga sample includes rural and farm schools where pupils are seldom exposed to English in spoken or written form. Given that English is the MOI in both sets of schools, this also probably explains the differences of 10,5% and 16% for numeracy at grades five and six respectively in favour of the Mamelodi schools.
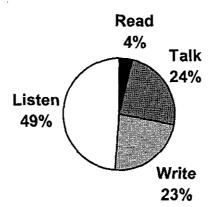
Section VI: Lesson Observations

The data collected by the junior researchers yielded some particularly clear patterns after it was scored and collated. The data was compared with the data collected during the senior researchers' observations and the two sources combined for the discussion that follow. Almost half of the lesson observations were in English and Literacy classes, with the remainder evenly spread between Science, Maths and Social Studies classes.

1. Focus of Classroom Activity
In the majority of all observations, the focus of classroom activity was the whole class. Despite the fact that classrooms are almost always arranged in a, by-now conventional, six-members to a group pattern, activity was still essentially an interchange between the teacher and the whole class; combined with the use of questions directed to the whole class, or to specific individuals.
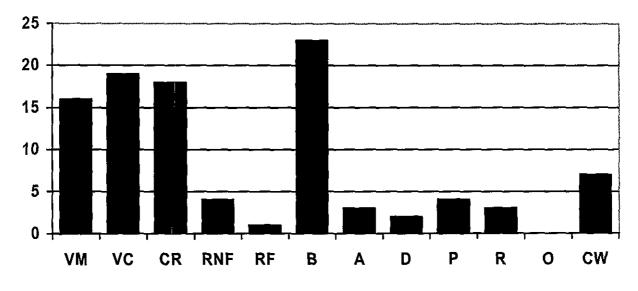
2. Modes of Pupil Activity
The fact that most pupils read very little at school has often been noted in other research, but there has always been the possibility that teachers do not consider reading an appropriate basis for a lesson when an external observer is present. This is particularly likely when the observation is a single annual event over the life of an evaluation. In this case, however, there were multiple observations by the junior researchers; university students visiting the schools weekly. The pie graph overleaf illustrates the proportion of the total time pupils spent reading, writing, speaking and listening during the observations.

Read 4%
Talk 24%
Listen 49%
Write 23%

The data very clearly confirms the perception that little attention is paid to reading. Whatever other changes have occurred in our schools, it is evident that listening to the teacher provide verbal instructions about the method and/or content of the lesson is the most common mode of pupil activity in classrooms.

3. Types of Classroom Interaction

Observers noted these interactions on a structured grid. The intention was not provide an exact description of each lesson but to provide a generalised picture of all of them. Each category scored yes or no, and observers were asked to restrict themselves to the most common, and to their relative frequency. Each category was scored and its relative frequency calculated against the total for all categories.

Key to Categories

VM	Verbal instruction re method	RF	Teacher reads fiction	P	Pupils work on project
VC	Verbal instruction re content	B	Teacher works off blackboard	R	Pupils make reports on work done
CR	Pupils chorus response	A	Pupils perform applied activity	O	Pupils do original research
RNF	Teacher reads non fiction	D	Teacher performs demonstration	CW	Pupils do classwork from texts or worksheet

The overwhelming preponderance of verbal interaction in the classrooms is clear. The single most common form of interaction is still the teacher writing on the blackboard while mixing instruction about content with questions directed to the class as a whole, or to selected individuals. While the form of the dominant methodology may have changed, for example most pupils are routinely seated in six-member groups, the practice has proved somewhat more ambiguous.

What is probably new is the relatively high score for verbal instruction about method. This almost certainly reflects the slowly increasing use of 'child-centred' and 'exploratory' methods. In most cases, the observed usage referred to instructions for the 'A' [Applied Activity] to 'O' [Original Research] spectrum of the grid; i.e. those activities most identified with 'new' methodologies. It is, further, likely that this increase is at the expense of instruction about content.

Similar observations are becoming common around the country, and it may be that as the methodological focus shifts, the amount of direct classroom instruction pupils receive tends to decrease. In a sense, this is what some of those methods are trying to achieve. If the new methodologies do, indeed, result in more effective learning we would expect to see that reflected in the pupil achievement levels. If such improvement is not achieved, it is possible that a declining level of direct teacher content instruction may be a significant contributory factor.

Interestingly enough, the observed usage of group methods also coincided with the 'A' to 'O' spectrum of the grid. This indicates a degree of consistency in the data that increases the likelihood that it is reliable and accurate.

Current and previous research also suggests three other factors to be considered in this context:

? Materials: Teachers appear to need practical applied materials when using new methodologies. Most of the successful NGO projects have provided materials which are directly framed in terms of different methods. Some of them have succeeded, to varying degrees, in combining content with method. The vast majority of 'successful' lessons using different methodologies observed around the country (by ESA, at any rate) are direct applications of an NGO activity.

? Feedback: Teachers also appear to benefit from some kind of classroom or, at the least, school-level feedback from an external 'critical friend'. Without this feedback, teachers can adopt 'hybridised' methods, combining newly-learned skills with familiar practices which are not always consonant.

? Whole-school development: When only a few teachers at a school are provided INSET and/or materials, they can become 'isolated practitioners' when they return to their classrooms. The rest of the school does not know what they are doing or why it may make different demands on the rest of the school community. A good example of this is the need for many new methodologies for more classroom contact time than the standard 30 minute period. Applied Science experiments and demonstrations, in particular, especially if they involve the distribution and collection of physical materials and chemicals to pupils, require much more time than this to make them

feasible in classes of 35 pupils. Other teachers may require all the staff to collect newspapers, or to allow him/her the use of the largest classroom in the school. Whatever the specific example, these differences can generate irritation and even obstruction. Experience has shown that change is much easier to achieve and maintain if a whole school approach is adopted.

APPENDIX A

A NOTE ON THE STUDY

K. Sedibe

The study that informs the report was commissioned by the President's Education Initiative (PEI) as managed by the Joint Education Trust (JET) and funded by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA).

The report is based on a case study of four schools participating in the EQUIP programme in the Gauteng Province. Since the National Business Initiative (NBI) is directly involved and has an interest in the EQUIP programme, it was agreed that the study would be subcontracted to a senior and four junior researchers, who were not linked to the EQUIP programme and the NBI. The central aim of the study was to describe the processes and to analyse the relevance of school development planning in relation to the internal and external contexts of the schools.

As indicated in the literature on school improvement and education quality, attempts to improve the quality of education and schooling have taken many forms. The production function model, which was popular with World Bank (WB) researchers, placed emphasis on the provision of inputs such as text books and `qualified teachers'. The school effectiveness movement tended to focus on inputs in relation to outputs. Although the WB and the school effectiveness movement begun to focus on process issues in the late eighties and early nineties, much of their work overlooked process issues for a very long time. Contrary to these two approaches, the school improvement movement tended to concentrate on the processes of change without regards for the role of inputs and the effects of change on learner achievement. In an attempt to advance the debates and strengthen project designs aimed at school improvement, researchers have begun to capture the strengths of these historically separate traditions within frameworks (models) which cater for the generic and context specific pursuit of quality. The school development planning approach, which is integral to the EQUIP model, is one such framework.

The basic theoretical assumption of EQUIP is that there are both generic and context specific notions of quality. The generic dimension of quality is characterised by the non-negotiable aspects or core business of education: for example, teaching and learning, regular attendance and learner performance. The need to impact positively on the generic dimension of quality, within a shorter period of time, has often resulted in rushed and menu driven interventions. The context specific dimension can only unfold in an environment that allows the relevant stakeholders to take responsibility for their own development. The stakeholders identify their needs and prioritise them according to the demands of the context. The role of external agencies is thus to facilitate the process but not to dictate to the schools what is best and how best to achieve their goals. The EQUIP model is therefore an attempt to address both generic and context-specific dimensions of quality.

Unlike menu driven and externally imposed initiatives, the school development planning process is labour and time intensive. Stakeholder buy-in and ownership are critical. Given the fact that other models of school improvement have been heavily criticised, it is wise to ask critical questions about the potential and strengths of the model. Does school development-planning lead to sustainable development? Can improved management and governance, in the long term, lead to improved learning and teaching? The report that follows attempts to answer some of these questions by analysing the EQUIP model and the importance of context in approaches to school improvement.

As noted by education researchers and development practitioners, change is a process not an event. Although the EQUIP programme has not as yet provided hard evidence of demonstrated significant impact in the classroom, it has succeeded in bringing the stakeholders together through an agreed vision and mission. Unlike many other schools, the four EQUIP schools are in the process of rebuilding their own unique organisational cultures. This is fundamentally important because a desirable culture of learning and teaching cannot be forged outside of a functional organisation or institution.

In addition to complying with the basic requirements of schooling - the generic dimensions of quality - the schools have had to deal with context specific issues. Although the improvement of learning and teaching is the ultimate objectives, the acquisition of learning and teaching materials without establishing a secure environment would be a worthless exercise. By the same token, educator development without basic supporting resources would be of limited value. The interconnectedness of these issues implies that one issue cannot be attended to without consideration for the other. Thus, the process of prioritisation needs to strike a balance between the core business of education, which is quality learning and teaching, and immediate needs as determined by context. Given the contextual realities of the schools, the School Development Plans of the different schools offer an appropriate response to the challenge of school quality improvement.

The fact that the organisational cultures of the schools are, to varying degrees healthy and robust, demonstrates that the model and its entry points (of governance and management) have the potential to impact positively on learning and teaching. However, organisational success does not easily translate into improved learning and teaching achievements. The classroom, like the school, is a sub-system with its own sub-cultures and dynamics. Simply put, there is no classroom intervention that will deliver at once and there is no intervention that will produce the same benefits for all teachers and every pupil. The effort that characterised the initial phase of the EQUIP programme would need to be redoubled when the programme moves into the classroom. And when the schools can support classroom interventions and protect them from countless disruptions such as fear and theft, the programme can be expected to have the desired and long awaited impact.

APPENDIX B

Theoretical Framework of Equip's school development approach

K. Sedibe

The acronym EQUIP stands for Education Quality Improvement Programme. EQUIP was started after a considerable amount of research into quality schooling and quality improvement in South Africa, developing and developed countries had been undertaken. In 1993, Edupol initiated research on the quality of schooling in South Africa, with a specific focus on policies and strategies, which could promote the building of the culture of learning and teaching. Several workshops on the culture of learning and teaching were held, case studies of schools in the townships were undertaken and research reports were produced in areas such as education governance and management, education quality improvement in South Africa and the developing countries.

The historic context of the early 1990's back to 1976 need not be rewritten. It is however important to note that during this period, the schooling system in the black townships was destabilised and generally speaking, perceived to be poor. Except for estimates made by anti-apartheid structures, formal studies on pupil migration from township to rural schools were not conducted. However, these movements continued until in the late eighties and gradually reversed in the early nineties. Like in the townships, the quality of education was poor in the rural areas, however, schools and schooling continued to operate. Isolated and occasional cases of destabilisation were reported here and there. With regards to township schools, few continued to operate during the periods of resistance. Even after the release of the political leaders the quality of education in many black (African) schools continued to be of poor quality. The isolated cases of success and good performance in a few schools were attributed to the charismatic leadership and effective management of principals.

At the national level, the system was `managed' in a bureaucratic and dictatorial fashion. The concept of governance was barely used and often confused with management. Buckland and Hofmeyr (1993), following the De Lange Report, Education Renewal Strategy and National Education Policy Investigation revisited the governance issue and argued for a distinction between governance and management. The main recommendation of the Buckland-Hofmeyr (1993) report is that education problems in South Africa cannot be solved by imposing solutions from the top, but could be solved through the establishment of forums which will create an enabling environment for inclusive negotiation. Such an approach would not be restricted to the national level of government only, but would filter down to the level of the school as well. More importantly, the report emphasised the need to recognise the complex interplay between centralisation and decentralisation.

Although leadership and strong management were said to be the cornerstone for success, they were not translatable into a policy statement. The reliance of schooling on personalities alluded to the fragility of quality - that is, the personality is the beacon of quality and their departure marks the end of the desired quality. This realisation came at a time when management, in the developing countries at least, was already undergoing major changes. Unlike the `one school one manager' system, theorists and educationalists had begun to explore the benefits of team management and systemic school improvement - especially because the

problems of poor quality schooling were not exclusive to the schools at the micro level of the system only. They were/are embedded within the micro, meso and macro levels of the educational system. The complicating factor is that the core business of the education sector is intricately linked and dependent on other sectors and vice versa.

Internationally and locally, literature on the role of the community and parents in quality improvement was becoming increasingly more available in the 1990s. While research in these areas emphasised the role of parental/community involvement in education quality improvement, projects which were influenced by the School Effectiveness movement relied on lists of items which were believed to be contributory factors towards quality education, i.e., the approach was menu driven. What was often overlooked in these projects is the role of human agency in making it possible for objectives to be achieved, e.g. buy-in, ownership, motivation, innovation, and more importantly the influence of contextual factors on the quality of schooling. Instead of emphasising inputs only, interventions were bound to look at inputs in relation to the processes of learning and teaching, and the influence of context in the `living culture' of the school and the supporting systems.

Around 1993/94, Edupol was keen to translate some of its research findings and policy direction into a practical programme and model with tangible results. Hence, EQUIP was established. The basic idea behind EQUIP is that governance and management are the entry points for school improvement. Governance structures would ensure that the relevant stakeholders can influence policy developments and management structures would be the implementing agency. In practice, the roles and functions of the two structures are intricately linked and inseparable. Contrary to the menu and donor driven approaches EQUIP opted for the local school development approach. The EQUIP model assumes that by bringing together stakeholders in a facilitated and systematically planned process, discussions about quality improvement will lead to agreements on appropriate quality improvement measures. Appropriate in the sense that decisions and priorities will be sensitive to the realities and contexts of the school. This process would further secure the buy-in and ownership of the stakeholders.

The EQUIP school development planning approach depends on the successful collaboration and co-operation of government, business, schools, communities and service providers in a meaningful partnership. The EQUIP model recognises that the stakeholders are equal partners with unequal and/or varied resources and expertise. This is achieved by making sure

that stakeholder groups are not restricted to conventional roles such as "private sector equals money", "black parents equals lack of expertise and thus suitable as observers", "students equals ignorance and lack of responsibility", the list goes on. In addition to challenging these stereotypes, the model challenges the notions that "service providers are the experts" and "government will deliver".

The strength of EQUIP is that it seeks to work within the policy frameworks of government, both national and provincial, instead of operating as an innovation outside government. EQUIP was never intended as a project with a specified life span, it was conceptualised to be a model that can be adopted and owned by government and developmental agencies. The role of the NBI is to mobilise private sector resources/expertise and to facilitate the process of participation, consultation and negotiation between the various stakeholders. The role of Government, through the provincial departments of education and the districts, is to provide policy guidance on issues such as curriculum and teaching and learning. Departmental guidance is pivotal to making sure that the model is coherent and operates within the education policy boundaries.

EQUIP is currently operating as a programme in few schools and districts. Some of the assumptions and intervention components of the programme are currently being reviewed. Developments in this regard that will inform the detailed nature of the model will be noted in the evaluation reports.

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APPENDIX C

Literature review on quality in education

K. Sedibe

It is one thing to arrive at some understanding of what we mean by quality, even to agree that quality education should not be the exclusive preserve of the select few, but how do we know when we have achieved quality" (Smith, 1996: 19).

The literature on education quality can be divided into two `contrasting traditions'; the school effectiveness and the school improvement movement. The origins of the school effectiveness literature can be traced back to the 1960s as a response to the research findings of the Coleman et al (1966) report. The authors alleged that schools contribute very little to student achievement as compared to family background. Ever since, education researchers have been undertaking research that could prove that schools and classroom inputs make a significant difference in student achievement (Smith, 1996: 9). The school effectiveness literature searched for input and process variables that seemed to have a correlation with high student achievement, however, more emphasis was given to the input variables. Many of the school effectiveness research succeeded in compiling lists of input and narrowly descriptive process variables that contributed towards high student achievement. Such lists of contributory inputs towards student achievement were not transferable from one context to the next and proponents of this movement could not account for the role of context in input differentiation. The basic weakness of the school effectiveness movement was its failure to describe change strategies which linked inputs to student outcome.

In the 1970s the school improvement movement emerged with the aim of creating better schools in marginalised or poor communities. The school improvement research was carried out mainly in North America and Europe while the school effectiveness research was dominant in the US and the UK (Christie and Potterton, 1997). According to Reynolds et al (1993), the school improvement literature focussed on the processes of change in schools without paying attention to the role of inputs and the effects of change on student achievement and education quality in general (in Smith, 1996). Reynolds et al (1993) state that the time has come for researchers and educationalists to recognise the complementarity of

the two traditions. Their view is summarised as follows (Reynolds et al 1993, in Smith, 1996: 10):

> .... There is much evidence for believing that both can contribute to the academic and practical needs of the other.... School improvers need to have knowledge about those factors within schools and within classrooms that may be manipulated or changed to produce higher quality schooling: school effectiveness researchers can provide that knowledge. Correspondingly, at their simplest level, school improvement strategies provide the ultimate test for many of the theories posited within the school effectiveness research enterprise, since potential changes in school outcomes identified by research as being linked to school process is the way of testing whether there is a causal link between school process and school outcomes.

Whole school development is a fairly new concept in the education quality literature. Although this form of development sees the school as a system that should be understood as "a whole" before its segments are changed, "research has shown that it is not easy to change schools. The factors that lead to development in one school do not necessarily apply in another" (Dalin et al 1993, in Christie and Potterton, 1996).

Many more theories/approaches for education quality improvement have emerged over the years, they have been implemented and some have resulted in the desired outcomes. Some of these theories were/are a step ahead of the traditions outlined above. Their theoretical underpinning took cognisance of the strengths and weaknesses of the effectiveness and improvement traditions. One such is the school development planning approach.

According to Hopkins (1996: 32), "schools that are developing are those that are able to survive with integrity in times of change". The process of school development planning encourages schools to "express their developmental aspirations in the form of priorities" which are supported by action plans. Within this framework, school improvement is "a strategy for educational change that enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the school's capacity for managing change" (Hopkins, 1996, 32). There is a generally agreed perception that effective and sustainable change is internally driven, but not imposed from outside through national policy reforms, legislation and decrees. It is therefore important to make a distinction between `naturally occurring', internally driven and externally supported

school improvement (Hopkins, 1996), on the one hand, and externally imposed change, on the other.

Much of the research and literature, referred to above, on school improvement and effectiveness have been carried out in industrialised countries. In the developing countries a large volume of work intended to improve the quality of (primary) education was undertaken by the World Bank (WB). WB research projects and the literature relied heavily on the production-function theories held by WB economists who were responsible for making recommendations on school improvement measures. The WB research findings have tended to emphasise a positive impact on achievement of the following school inputs (Fuller, 1990):
- teacher quality and INSET in particular,
- availability of sufficient textbooks and other instructional materials,
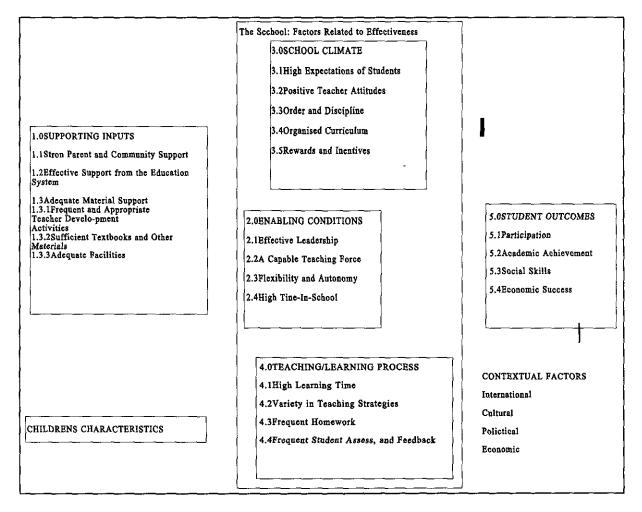- increased instructional time, and
- frequent homework

The correlation between school inputs (like reduced class sizes and increased teacher salaries) and student achievement has not been established (Hanushek, 1995). In Pathways to Change, Verspoor (1989) states that less successful WB primary school improvement projects in the developing countries have been concentrating on system-wide measures and have been neglecting implementation at the levels of the school and the classroom. According to Torres (1992), the WB perceives education as a field where inputs but not people interact, hence teachers are regarded as inputs. Its emphasis on quantifiable variables which could be understood in cost-benefit and rates-of-return discourse has contributed to the Bank's failure in addressing the qualitative aspects of classroom and school change. Torres (1992) states that the assumption behind the WB's system-wide approach and input-based recommendations is that through declarations, decrees, text books, curriculum reform and teacher training, reform at the classroom level will "land". Until recently the WB has based its recommendations for expansion and quality improvement in the developing countries on the findings of the production-function studies

In his analysis of the literature on school effectiveness in the developing countries, Hanushek (1995: 229) reiterated an old but not stale question , "do the resources purchased and used by the schools systematically improve student performance? (Maybe one can even ask the question, do schools utilise purchased resources, minimally or optimally?) Attempts to

respond to this question were suggested in the Bank's 1994 report; Planning and Monitoring the Quality of Primary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (Heneveld, 1994). It was further substantiated upon in Schools Count (Heneveld and Craig, 1996). Heneveld and Craig (1996) made an appeal to WB researchers to start paying attention to the dynamics of school and classroom processes in order to understand the relationship between context (internal and external to the school), school inputs, school climate and learning and teaching processes on the one hand, and student outcome on the other. The WB has subsequently developed a composite model / conceptual framework of school effectiveness - see diagram 1 below.

WB Composite Model: Education Quality; Defining What is Important

Heneveld, 1994

Heneveld and Craig cautions researchers from accepting the framework and its definitions as a complete checklist of isolated characteristics as follows: (i) the school is the locus for making education effective; (ii) all the characteristics of effective schools are mutually reinforcing; and (iii) the proper mix of these characteristics and how they are nurtured reinforce each other in a particular setting" and depend on the context in which the school operates (1992: 17).

The need to understand contextual dynamics was reinforced in two sets of case studies by Proudford and Baker (1995) and Christie and Potterton (1996). Proudford and Baker (1995) conducted a case study of four secondary schools in Australia. Their basic concern was that the literature findings of the school effectiveness and improvement movements do not explain the dynamics of school improvement and effectiveness in different contexts. They discovered that three schools which could be classified ineffective in the traditional framework possessed all the relevant attributes associated with effective schools. In attempting to respond to the needs of their communities the schools experienced dilemmas and tensions on issues of academic and welfare curricula. The tensions had a negative effect on the classroom practices adopted by teachers. However, the introduction of welfare and vocationally oriented subjects in the so-called ineffective schools proved that the schools were prepared to take risks in order to serve the needs of their clientele.

The so-called effective school was effective in academic terms, but did not respond to the needs of its clientele. The conclusion arrived at in the study is that the process of schooling is interactive, fluid and dynamic, and value-laden rather than value-neutral". Consequently, an analysis of quality schooling should take into consideration the internal and external contexts of the school, contextual priorities and challenges, the capacity to modify direction in light of emerging problems and issues, and the capacity to appraise the process of schooling - particularly in terms of the questions; Whose interests are being served? Who benefits? Who is being disadvantaged?" (Proudford and Baker, 1995: 290).

In a closely related study, Christie and Potterton (1997) identified six features of resilience in thirty two South African schools which manage to survive/thrive against the odds: a sense of responsibility, strong leadership, centrality of teaching and learning, safety and organisation, authority and discipline, and a culture of concern. Some of the schools are situated in communities haunted by violence, poverty and a climate of poor schooling. The factors

contributing to the success of the studied schools ranged from effective leadership, parental involvement, the influence of local traditions, a sense of spiritualism and religious foundation. The diversity of the characteristics of the schools led to the conclusion that there is no checklist of "discrete characteristics that could be unproblematically transferred from school to school", rather, characteristics of effective schools should be understood as "interactive features of the living cultures of the schools".

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