

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND SYSTEMS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION, WITH RELEVANCE TO DISTRICTS, CIRCUITS AND SCHOOLS OF ETHEKWINI
REGION

By

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ABSTRACT

The main task of Chief Superintendents of Education Management (CSEMs) and Superintendents of Education Management (SEMs) and principals is to achieve the goals of the Education Department. They direct the activities and performance of their supervisees. In pursuing this, a leadership relationship and interaction between the supervisors and his supervisees is necessary.

These leaders however, perform two significant roles; that of leading and that of being led. The leadership of these leaders is influenced /affected by the relationship the leader has with his supervisor to perform optimally or minimally. For these managers in Education to lead effectively, they need to be well and timeously informed about matters.

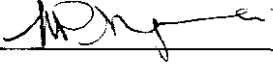
The SEMs need to be kept abreast of education related issues because of the type of work they do. It ranges from communicating departmental goals and objectives, consultation with stakeholders, chairing workshops and meetings of principals, parents and School Governing Bodies. They also serve on recruitment panels, among many other functions.

Various forms of communication styles systems and communication strategies are viewed as significantly crucial in the work of the SEM. The SEM however relies on senior management for information. Latest and revised policies come to the SEM via the line function. Reaching the set destination depends on the leadership styles of the supervisors, whether they are traditional or transformational leaders. The SEM likewise, disseminates the information to the principals of schools. They in turn do the same to their supervisees at school and to School Governing Bodies, where necessary. The leadership styles of the SEMs and principals also affect information dissemination either positively or negatively.

The results of the study points out that communication channels are not always adhered to in the Department of Education. Information does not reach the SEMs on time. E-communication is still minimally used in the Department of Education.

STATEMENT

With the signature below I, Ntombifuthi Patricia Mngoma, hereby declare that the work that I present in this thesis is based on my own research, and that I have not submitted this thesis to any other institution of higher education to obtain an academic qualification.



N.P. Mngoma

February 23, 2008

Date

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABET: Adult Basic Education

CES: Chief Education Specialist

CSEM: Chief Superintendent of Education Management

ECD: Early Childhood Development

ELRC: Education Labour Relations Council

ELRC: Education Labour Relations Council

EMGD: Education Management Governance and Development

ESDSS: Education Service Delivery Support Services

KZN DoE/ DOE: The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, sometimes abbreviated as “the Department”

MEC: Member of Executive Council

PGSES: Psychological Guidance & Special needs Education Services

RSM: Regional Senior Manager

SASA: South African Schools Act

SG: Superintendent General

SEM: Superintendent of Education Management

V: Variable

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PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher discusses an overview of contextual issues in communication, and their status with regard to the transformation and change in the public sector as it is an entity of leadership in the organization. Lipham (1974: 122) puts it this way, Leadership is the initiation of a new structure or procedure for accomplishing organizations goals and objectives or for changing organization goals and objectives. The researcher also looks at how the leadership styles of managers affect or influence communication. She also explores the challenges facing communication in the public sector, as a tool to policy and new legislation implementation.

Schwella, cited in Wessels and Pouw (1999: 342) avers that if new paradigms are neither systematically stronger nor shared by substantive groups of professionals and academics their potential to influence the current reality is limited.

As from the 1990s the pursuance of transformation in the South African public sector has experienced a paradigm shift from bureaucratic public administration to a new and unique sector African Public Management paradigm. The researcher addresses inter-alia, key issues in styles of leadership, their relationship to theories of communication and how communication is managed and disseminated in the Department of Education in the eThekweni Region.

The researcher aims to look at concepts and assumptions that inform the Education Department.

1.2 Statement of the problem

According to David (1994: 28) some leaders and managers have underscored the role and importance of communication for organisational success. The vision and mission of the Department filters down, through communication, to the lower levels of the Department. It was, reported in the KwaZulu-Natal Management Needs Assessment (1999: 4) report that the Department is fragmented, and poor communication was identified as a problem by most people in the organization. Relationships are often adversarial as opposed to collaborative, with

individuals working in isolation from one another. There is no shared vision and mission and little commitment to improving practices.

Communication here goes according to post levels. By the time the information reaches the final stage it is either too late or it has been misinterpreted. When the information is disseminated people extract a different meaning from the message, this depends on the value the person is striving to accomplish (Jackson as quoted in Nyembe-Kganye 2005: 2).

Novek (1999: 62) puts this aptly when he says; “a well defined programme would teach participants to share a common vision through communication. Communication practices are central in building the social bonds that allow collective action.” Only adequate communication within the institution will ensure that information is transferred and processed correctly and meaningfully. Poor communication will mean that inadequate transfer of information takes place which, in turn, leads to poor decision making. For the Department of Education like all other departments, to function effectively and efficiently, its managers have to be informed by relevant, accurate and timeous information. In some instances, the information does not reach people on the ground on time, because of the delay caused by some senior officials. As a result this leads to uneven distribution of information and dissatisfaction of members of staff. (Nyembe-Kganye 2005: 2)

The late arrival of information results in failure to send feedback on time, and failure to observe the deadlines. SEMs end up providing inaccurate critical information, which informs the Department’s database in Education Information Management System (EMIS) and also the Department’s budget. In 2004 two headcounts in schools were conducted by the Department to try and get the correct statistics for the EMIS unit. According to the MEC in her annual performance report (2006: 8), the weakness in the province’s EMIS manifest itself in various ways that restricts the planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting capacity of the Department.

The latest models of communication, which are viewed as a solution to some of the communication problems in the Department, the Department of Education has not yet matched them Nyembe-Kganye 2005. As a result of this, the Department of Education being a big organization and with its bureaucratic structure still faces problems of communication.

The strategy for the management of communication that the Department has made provisions for is that of research and of responding to public queries through mass media. What is lacking is a structure to manage, distribute and control information flow within the Department. The validity of this statement will be tested by empirical research.

1.3 Research Questions

The primary aim of the study is to provide guidelines for effective communication in the Department of Education (DoE). The study aims to establish whether through careful planning, and the establishment of effective guidelines, effective communication strategy can be established in the DoE.

The study seeks to respond to the following questions.

- What forms of Communication channels and systems are used by middle managers and senior managers in the Department of Education?
- How effective are these forms of communication?
- Do communication channels and communication systems; contribute to the effective functioning of the district and circuits?
- Do Leadership styles have any impact on effective communication?
- Has the Department transformed into using e-communication?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The following objectives of this study are meant to determine:

- What forms, of communication channels and systems are used by middle managers and senior managers in the Department of Education?
- The effectiveness of these channels and systems of communication.
- If communication channels and systems of communication contribute to the effective functioning of district and circuits.
- *The impact of the leadership styles on effective communication.*
- The Departments' transformation into using e-communication in communicating.

1.5 Significance of the Study

With the new dispensation coming into being with different legal framework, regulative policies, and opening up of new units within the Department, a lot of information which need to filter down to all the levels in the Department came into being. There is no other way to disseminate this information except through communication. Communication is not only a

critical tool in the implementation of these policies, but also in policy formulation. Participation from all affected people is vital.

Policies, curricula changes need engagement with all relevant stakeholders. Also, for any change to be effective it requires a buy in from all concerned. This is normally achievable through interaction. Transformation creates a challenge for managers to transform from the way things used to be, to what they ought to be. The South African constitution and the Bill of Rights together with the Batho Pele Principles emphasize information access and participation by all towards decision making. Every manager of the present times is thus called upon to engage in this practice.

One way of addressing this situation would be to change the leadership styles of managers who were groomed to believe that information was a privilege of a few, and that the only form of communication was the top down approach. Also, the idea of having computers as office decors for managers will have to take a turn if the Department wants to improve communication and service delivery. The managers have to start to look at where information is needed and disseminate it to relevant stakeholders for them to make informed decisions. Such informed decisions will emerge where there is a high level of communication between the manager and the subordinate.

So far it is not clear as to what extent these fundamental practices are applied in Education. This study seeks to formulate possible guidelines for the best possible ways of contributing to advanced and acceptable means of communication in the Department of Education with reference to districts, circuits and schools.

Fielding (1995: 3) maintains that for an organization to have well coordinated activities, it has to have 'upward, downward and lateral communication'. An organization has to communicate with customers, suppliers and the general public. For this reason, levels of communication, types and forms of communication and their implications will be discussed.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

The study was conducted at *eThekwin*i Region. *eThekwin*i Region was chosen out of 4 regions in KwaZulu-Natal. This was within reasonable traveling distance of the researcher 's home and place of work. A study conducted in this area would be fully representative as *eThekwin*i Region has urban, semi-urban, rural and semi-rural areas. Umlazi District and

Pinetown District have all the four categorized areas and Ileembe District fall short of the urban area.

The targeted population was the, circuit, ward and school based managers. With school based managers, it was only the principals, and the School Governing Body chairpersons.

Certain acronyms that are officially accepted by the Department of Education, have been used throughout the document however, these acronyms were only used after having been used in full. To bring better understanding of this study; scope, meaning and perspective of the concepts used are defined.

1.6.1 Definition of Terms

The concepts that are often used in this study are clarified to avoid misinterpretation and ambiguity.

1.6.2 Communication

Belch and Belch (1995: 154) argue that communication is defined as the passing of information, the exchange of ideas or the process of establishing a commonness and oneness of thought between a sender and receiver: this definition clearly states that communication is a two way process. Hicks (1996: 130) on the other hand, defines communication as a thread that holds the various interdependent parts together. According to Klopper (2000: 4) "Communication is a theory of learning, grounded on the premise that human beings continuously and automatically construct knowledge of our interactions with other entities in our environment." From the three definitions it is clear that communication has more than one function or meaning.

1.6.3 Effective Communication

Ansari and Philips (2001: 125) say, "Effective communication is direct, accurate, timely and relevant. It is a major factor in multi-stakeholder and inter-professional collaboration." They also state that effective communication needs to be of high quality, frequent, informative and comfortable and should allow for effective delivery of the intended message of communication, constituents can be made to gain an image of the company, which the company deserves. Communities are further enabled to understand what the company is about and for what does it stand.

1.6.4 Leadership

According to Reddy (2004: 20) "The leader is an individual who has the ability to influence a group". People use different terms to refer to leaders. An effective leader encourages

open and direct communication. One of the qualities of an effective leader is that, he/she listens to staff members in order to gain information and understanding of their needs, and fears any obstacles that might hinder progress.

Leadership is a way of interacting and operating and more specifically of communication between a leader and his or her subordinates. In summary a leader stimulates, directs and coordinates interaction.

1.6.5 Organizational Communication

According to Smit *et al.* (1997: 370) managerial communication occurs in three forms, namely intra-personal, interpersonal, and organisational communication. In intra-personal communication, managers receive, process, and transmit information to themselves. In interpersonal communication, messages are transmitted directly between two or more people, on a person-to-person basis. In organisational communication, information is transferred between organisations or between different units or departments in the same organisation. Rasberry and Lemoine (1986: 84) define communication as 'A process by which people work with others to mutually accomplish organisational objectives'. The term organizational has two elements: namely (1) people working together (2) toward a common purpose. Organizational communication is the necessary communication that takes place to achieve that purpose.

1.6.6 E- Communication

According to O'Brien (1997: 213) E-Communication i.e. Electronic mail, voice mail, bulletin board systems and facsimile, allow organizations to send messages in text, video or in voice form to transmit copies of documents within seconds.

1.6.7 The Fax

Longman Dictionary (1987) describes the fax as "a facsimile or the transmission of a hand written page or image by electronic means. While the Oxford dictionary defines the fax as an exact copy of a document made by electronic scanning and transmitted as data by telecommunication links.

1.6.8 Grapevine

Mersham and Skinner (1999: 194) say, "The Grapevine is an unofficial confidential person to person chain of verbal communication." It originated during the civil war when telegraph lines were hung from trees and resembled grapevine (Rasberry and Lemoine 1986). This information can begin with anyone in the organisation and can flow in any direction.

The grapevine's prime function is to disseminate information to employees that is relevant to their needs. The grapevine derives its existence from employees' social and personal interests, rather than from formal organisational requirements.

1.6.9 Feedback

According to Mersham and Skinner (1999: 13) and SAMDI (2005) feedback refers to observable behaviours and effects that are objective and specific. SAMDI (2005) further states that, there are four types of feedback, silence, criticism, advice and reinforcement. Feedback is a response by the recipient, to the source's message. It could also be a measure of the effectiveness of a previous communication. It makes communication a dynamic two-way process.

1.6.10 The Scientific Management School

The Scientific Management School recognized that poor communication occurs when; the span of control of a manager becomes too wide; because he/she has more than five or six subordinates to manage. This school saw communication in a one-way direction and that it was necessary to command and control through vertical, formal structure. Mersham and Skinner (1999)

1.6.11 System Approach

The System Approach advocates the principle of links in an organization. The individuals in an organization are not seen as isolated persons. All members of an organization are linked as interdependent parts of the whole organizational structure. Mersham & Skinner (1999: 24) state that the System approach reveals the interrelatedness of components and stress the arrangement of these parts as the key to maximizing performance. The essential element of communication in the system is emphasized by most theorists. Communication serves to link the interdependent parts or sub systems. In the organization Systems Approach is viewed as an open system.

1.6.12 Structure

Marx 1981 cited in (Luthans 1998: 519) states that organizational structure is a specific framework of established posts in which people carry out certain actions, and are so grouped that they can pursue a common goal. Communication is the metaphorical thread that holds the various interdependent parts of an organization together. In the educational scenario, work is also divided vertically in order of intricacy or difficulty and according to the seniority of the post. This largely takes the form of a pyramidal structure. This determines the mutual relations between the various levels of authority and also fixes the responsibility and reporting systems

whereby the flow of information is facilitated. This division is an essential prerequisite to maintaining efficiency and avoiding the overlapping of functions.

1.6.13 Manager

Rasberry and Lemoine (1986: 324) define a manager as someone who gets things done through others. For instance if managers are busy, they usually delegate tasks to other members of staff. The task will be done through other staff members. On the other hand Theron and Bothma (1990: 179) define management as “A social and technical process which utilizes resources, influences human action and facilitates change in order to accomplish organisational goals”.

1.6.14 Message

According to Rosario-Braid (1983: 31) the message is “The idea to be transmitted” according to De Vito (1976: 11) the message “ may be in the form of ink on paper, sound waves in the air, impulses in an electric current, a wave of the hand, a flag in the air, or any other signal capable of being interpreted meaningfully”. It can be viewed as one or two symbols to which one attaches meaning.

1.6.15 Hierarchy

Hierarchy simply states that, every member of an organization has one individual in a position above him or her from whom he or she receives directions. It tends to be formal communication, in largely vertical directions. Commands come down from the organization; reports and other information go up. It prevents subordinates from passing bad news to their bosses.

1.6.16 Downward Communication

According to Smit *et al.* (1997) downward communication starts with top management and flows down through the management levels to workers. Downward communication refers to messages sent from the higher levels of the organizational hierarchy to lower levels. The major purpose of this communication is to provide subordinates with information on organisational goals, strategies, and policies. Downward communication flows are more frequent in an organization than upward flows. When there is contact between individuals of status, communication from the superior to the subordinate takes place more easily than communication from the subordinate to the superior (ibid). Work is divided vertically to expedite the execution of the functions of the organisation and to give the employees the opportunity of sharpening and

expanding their own skills and expertise. Instructions and orders are the most common forms of downward communication. Along with these order-giving messages are the accompanying explanations of procedures and goals. Managers are also responsible for giving appraisals of workers and for motivating them, all in the name of productivity and for the good of the organization as a whole.

1.6.17 Upward Communication

Upward communication is communication that is initiated by workers. It comes from lower levels and moves to higher levels of the hierarchy of the organisation. Usually the feedback that is given by workers in lower ranks to the superiors is sugar coated. The main function of upward communication is to supply information to the upper levels about what is happening at the lower levels (ibid).

1.6.18 Communication Networks

According to Mersham and Skinner (1999: 151) communication takes place through vertical and lateral communication channels. A network can be identified by establishing who communicates with whom and who the central and peripheral figures are in the communication process. Networks are the communication structures created to send and receive messages between team members. In simple terms, a network may be as basic as who talks to whom in a group. People are connected to various forms of communication networks such as peer networks, local network, church networks, school networks and professional network.

1.7 Research Methodology

The methods used in this investigation included case studies, sample, research instruments, pilot study, data collection and data analysis as management tools of this process.

1.7.1 Sampling

The sample for study was composed of thirty Superintendents of Education Management (SEMs) eighty principals and eighty School Governing Body chairpersons. They were selected from three districts of eThekwin Region namely, Ilembe, Pinetown and Umlazi districts. They were given questionnaires to respond to via the SEMs.

1.7.2 Data Collection

Gathering of information was done through case studies and questionnaires. The researcher personally handed the questionnaires to the SEMs at their extended regional meeting for all the categories of respondents. Case studies were gathered through informal interviews with some SEMs. SEMs assisted the researcher in bringing back questionnaires from respondents.

1.7.3 Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft excel was used to analyse data so as to ease the construction of tables and graphs.

1.7.4 Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted on a small number of colleagues i.e. DCESS and principals. They were chosen on the basis of their close proximity to the researcher's place of employment. The pilot study is meant to check whether there was any ambiguity in the questionnaires and make corrections before the actual study.

1.8 Plan of study

The research study consists of eight chapters. Chapter one presents the general overview of the study. It provides the aims and specific objectives, definition of terms and significance of the study. This chapter further explains the research method applied in the study. Chapter two presents the case studies which reflect how omissions of communication in the organisation may affect service delivery. Case studies in this study are practical example of what obtains in the Department of Education. They are presented to support the study. Chapter three outlines the literature review which has a direct bearing to the study. Forms, channels and communication systems are addressed in this chapter as properly planned management tools of the Department. Chapter four discusses the organisational structure and channels of communication in general and in particular to the Department of Education, where the study was conducted. Chapter five deals with leadership and management, styles of leadership and management were also looked into. Chapter six is an expose' of the research methodology applied in this study where questionnaires and SPSS were used. Chapter seven is the main empirical core of the study, engaging in the analysis and interpretation of data collected. Chapter eight summarises, concludes and makes recommendations on the collected, analysed and interpreted information.

1.9 Conclusion

In this chapter the rationale, problems, objectives, and methodology which highlight sampling, collection of data, data analysis and pilot study underpinning this study have been outlined. Key terms in the study have been defined to give clarity on the terms used. I will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques, which involves an initial pilot study to improve on the questionnaire. This will be followed by a survey of Principals, Superintendents of Education Management, and School Governing Bodies in the eThekweni Region. A literature survey will be carried out to ascertain what research has already been carried out in the field which supports my findings. The findings of this research will be quantified using the SPSS 13 program.

A plan of action that is to be followed to make this study a reality was also presented. The next chapter highlights the communication challenges that are experienced by lower level managers through the use of the case studies.

2.1 Introduction

In a case study a particular individual, program, or event is studied in depth for a defined period of time. A case study may be especially suitable for learning more about a little known or poorly understood situation. It is useful for generating or providing preliminary support for the objectives of any investigation, according to Mersham and Skinner (1999). Conclusions are drawn that may have implications beyond the specific case that has been studied. In this study the researcher deemed it fit to provide several case studies that have a direct bearing on the topic for discussion.

The researcher fully understands the authenticity needed in using case studies; but again had to heed to the bill of rights embedded in the constitution of the country, the right to privacy therefore it became difficult for the researcher to mention people's names as some issues are too personal e.g. the educator who was suspended.

The following case studies have been conducted as a field-based test for the validity of the problem study presented in chapter one.

2.2 Case Study No 1

In 2005 a learner was stabbed at Ekwazini Secondary School, one of the schools in Umlazi. The Member of the Executive Council (MEC), Ms Ina Cronje visited the school and made a promise to the bereaved and needy family that the Department of Education would assist the family with the funeral expenses.

After the MECs' departure, letters and telephone calls were made by the district office to access the funds from head office without any success. A number of officials from neighbouring districts as well as the Regional office were also consulted to try and get the relevant information without any success.

Eventually, to adhere to the funeral date set, the school and Ukhozi FM contributed cash and organized donations for the family. The MECs' statements was considered to be political statements like some other political statements, only to learn in 2007 that there are such funds

provided to take care of such incidents. This information, however, has not filtered down to the people who need it the most, that is, the SEMs.

Some officials have recently been lucky to be in a financial management workshop held at Embizweni Conference Centre, where a similar case was cited as an example by one district director. One junior official from the head office, under cooperate services confirmed that such funds, which are known as Discretion funds, are available in the office of the MEC.

2.3 Case Study No 2

Another case where communication did not filter down well to the foot soldiers of the Department in the Umlazi district was the introduction of women cooperatives as food suppliers in schools. Women cooperatives were not identified by School Governing Bodies, not by principals nor by SEMs. Previously School Governing Bodies, together with principals of schools were work shopped on functions and responsibilities of women cooperatives by the Nutrition sector of the Head office at Umlazi Comprehensive Technical High School. The SEMs were not invited to that workshop.

When problems arose with the introduction of Women cooperatives at schools, SEMs were consulted. They had no solutions because they had not been appraised on the cooperatives pilot policy. Meanwhile, the individual suppliers who had previously supplied the schools demanded to be reinstated in the schools they had previously supplied, which were now allocated to Women cooperatives. The policy however, states that, the supplier's contract is renewed yearly; thus they could not make such claims as their contract had expired.

A lot of time went into meetings to resolve this problem. The School Governing Bodies were in support of the previous individual suppliers and did not want to accept Women cooperatives as food suppliers. Feeding came to a halt in some schools. SEMs of affected schools, having been given the policy document and appraised on it, were able to make valuable contribution to resolve the problem jointly with Nutrition district coordinator and cluster managers who were also assisted with policy documents.

2.4 Case Study No 3

Another case study that I want to make reference to is one school where some educators were evicted by the community in 2003 on the allegations of poor performance. Then the rest of the staff joined forces with them, saying if they allowed evictions to happen to their colleagues,

in future it could be their turn to be chased away from school by the community. They left school and reported at the circuit office daily. Within three days, whilst the circuit officials were still engaging with leaders of the community to resolve the matter, educators reporting at the circuit office involved one of the social partners (the South African Democratic Teachers' Union).

The Union demanded that the educators be taken back to the school where they belong, and security be provided by the Department of Education the following morning. The union representation demanded commitment from the SEM and the Circuit Manager there and then that security would be provided at the school the following morning. The departmental officials were to tell educators to go back to school with that promise. They maintained that the Department of Education has a route course of providing security to schools.

The response of the officials was that they were still going to consult on that issue. That was not acceptable to the union representatives as they had information which warranted their demand. The officials, on the other hand did not have that information. However, on consultation with the Labour Relations section of the eThekweni Region, the SEM was provided with the relevant circular which subsequently assisted the circuit officials to resolve the matter. The document in question was the KZN Circular no 55 of 2001.

That document provided circuit officials with information that says it is the Department's responsibility to provide security but only when funds are available; if not, School Safety and Security Committee has to be established which involves community structures; for example, Community Policing Forum, various community leaders and SGB members, to secure the school.

This was critical information that gave the officials a breakthrough, for at that time there were no funds available for officials to commit the Department. Non-availability of information almost put the officials and the Department into disrepute, but its image was tainted because there was also involvement of South African Police services representative involved to cool down the situation at school. They could not understand that educators could have more information than the officials.

2.5 Case Study No 4

The other case was that of the outcome of a dispute where the award favoured the educator at arbitration. The award was not communicated to the SEM who was to implement it. The teacher organisation took the non- implementation of the award as a violation of the

aggrieved educator's rights. They challenged the SEM about non implementation, who then asked for proof of the award from the union members. After a lengthy debate, the unions, maintaining that the SEM should have received the information from his principals, eventually gave him the original letter addressed to the educator.

After getting the contact details from the letter, the SEM phoned the person to be contacted to confirm authenticity of the award. The existence of the award was confirmed by the contact person who is a departmental official. A copy of the award was faxed to the SEM. Using that information the SEM was able to re-instate the educator who had been suspended, and kept a copy of that letter.

2.6 Case Study No 5

One of the issues around communication was when the no fee schools were introduced. The first time that most SEMs heard about them was when such an announcement of such schools was made on air. Principals of schools as well as other departmental officials also heard about this policy for the first time over the air. This happened towards the beginning of the 2006 school year. As a result some of the parents who could afford paying school fees did not pay. The announcement was not specific on who should or should not pay, and that certain schools had been identified. The majority of parents stopped paying fees for their children.

Later a circular with the necessary specifications was circulated to all relevant departmental officials. Meetings were held with principals and SGBs to put the issue into its correct perspective. Subsequently those parents who could afford to pay school fees for their children started to make payments. Again this deliverable was in the 2006/2007 Annual Performance Plan, which show that other managers in the Department do not communicate effectively with subordinates.

2.7 Case Study No 6

The way the workshops are run for departmental officials is another case of poor communication for school-based departmental officials. It is not unusual for a Ward manager to learn from principals of several workshops that are scheduled for the same target group at the same time. The departmental workshops are loosely structured and lack proper coordination, which results in taking away a number of teachers away from school at the same time.

There are some that the SEM is aware of and others that s/he is not aware of. When those who have informed the SEM experience a high rate of absenteeism in their workshops they approach the SEM for assistance. When s/he tries to follow up the complaint with schools, he is informed that educators have gone to other workshops and the school is operating with a skeleton staff. Lack of a coordinated year plan results in such situations.

2.8 Case Study No 7

With the planning section the challenge has been with the two projects the Department use in adding or upgrading classrooms in schools. Initially, the Department of Education had an agreement with the Department of Works whereby this department was to build 500 classrooms, in different schools identified by the Department. That project was known as sub 500. When this department experienced a serious backlog, the Department of Education entered into another agreement with Ithala bank to speed up the process. That project was termed fast-track.

Eventually, in some schools, these projects took place almost concurrently or within a difference of one year or two years. That resulted in some duplication of the service. The reason for this was lack of inter-departmental communication to verify whether there was still a need to further build classrooms where one project had already put up classrooms. The conditions had changed, in some schools the enrolment had dropped tremendously and the need for more classrooms was no longer there. Had they communicated with ward managers who monitor schools closely, the Department would have curbed this duplication, of service. SEMs discovered that when foundations have already been put in some schools. In other schools the principals complaining, of slow progress, by building contractors. The absence of lateral communication proved to be a factor here.

2.9 Conclusion

The researcher has presented seven case studies from different sections of the KZN DoE. The case studies demonstrate that the communication system of the KZN DoE is broken causing miscommunication and a breakdown in communication. They reflect information gaps in various sections of the Department. These case studies have affirmed the validity of the problem stated in the introduction. They form the basis of the study hence their broad discussion. The chapter that follows explains communication theories and their relationship to organisations.

COMMUNICATION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to look at the forms, channels and systems of communication at eThekweni Region. It brings in, the theoretical ideologies of communication theorists which explains the types of communication applied in the Department of Education.

3.2 What Is Communication?

According to Smit and Cronje (1992: 354) communication is defined as “a process involving the acquisition and the use of information for planning, organizing, leading and controlling”.

- Fielding (1995: 4) on the other hand, defines communication as “a transaction whereby participants together create meaning through the exchange of symbols”
- Both these definitions are relevant to managers in education. Although they appear to be different, in essence both emphasize the importance of having a shared meaning

Communication is a thread that holds the various interdependent parts of an organization together CSEMs, SEMs and principals, must see that the senior management is more person-orientated than production-orientated and is willing at all levels to listen actively. Lorsch (1978) is of the opinion that an organization without effective communication is as inconceivable as a book without pages. In all the processes of an organization, communication is found to be indispensable. It is regarded as an intra-generic phenomenon as it arises in each generic component. It is through communication that the shared vision and mission of the Department is formulated and passed on to all levels of the Department including districts in the eThekweni Region. All managers, including senior management have to function as an effective link in communication. Communication needs to permeate all activities in the eThekweni Region; since this is a management tool through which employees understand their organizational role and integrates Department's sub-units.

Not only is communication an essential ingredient in the internal functioning of the Department, but it is also vital in the Departments' information exchanges with its environment.

Communication within the organizational context is usually defined as the process by which an idea is transferred from a source to a recipient with the intention of changing his or her behaviour.

The coming in, of women cooperatives into play as food suppliers in schools is a good example here. In an attempt to persuade schools to accept women cooperatives to supply food, to learners at their schools, several meetings were held, between Departmental officials and the schools that rejected them. Inter-action engagements with schools, yielded positive results as schools eventually accepted women cooperatives to function at their schools.

From the viewpoint of achieving effective communication, negative feedback is more important than positive feedback. Yet it is more likely to be unrewarded or even punished because of its disruptive nature. So far the DoE uses the programmes evaluation approach, upward communication and the performance measurement tool in gaining feedback. Upward communication is mostly business, linked and has no room for opinions. The general public has resorted to writing directly to the MEC in order to air their views and to ask for her assistance as the communication policy is not yielding required results if it is there. This is an indication of the fact that, middle managers because of protocol do not have a direct line of communication with senior officials of the Department; otherwise public concerns would be raised by them.

3.3 Approaches to Communication Protocols in Organisations

In this section schools of thought are discussed regarding organizational communication protocols, that is the scientific management school and human relations school.

3.3.1 The Scientific Management School

In this approach, communication is viewed as the giving of orders and the explaining of procedures and operations. Only the formal structure of the organization and the formal communication systems are recognized. Each supervisor should manage the work of a handful of subordinates, usually five or six at most, and unit of command; which stipulates that each individual should have only one direct boss, and the delegation of authority to subordinates. Be it DCEs or CEs in the Education Service Delivery Support Services officials report to more than one boss, contrary to the stipulations of the Scientific Management School, one at the district level other's at the level of the province.

The Scientific Management School recognized that poor communication occurred in organizations, especially when certain management principles were not followed correctly. For

example if the span of control of a manager became too wide because he or she had more than five or six subordinates, ability to communicate effectively with subordinate staff was likely to suffer. eThekweni Region has quite big districts thus the RSM relies on delegated authority.

Adherents of this school argued that the answer to this problem was the delegation of the authority to the managers at lower levels in the hierarchy with an accompanying decrease in the span of control. The DoE follows this school of thought however the accountability lies with the Superintendent General (SG). The Line officials who are Deputy Director Generals, Chief Directors, Directors, and Deputy Directors are links in the chain of command and so their function is to communicate the objectives of the top management to subordinates and ensure that such instructions are carried out. The Department of Education follows the principles of this school as the structure in chapter four will reveal.

Overall, we can say that this school saw communication in a one-way direction: it was necessary only to command and control through a vertical, formal structure.

3.3.2 The Human Relations school

The behavioural approach strongly favours the democratic leader. This leader encourages members to participate in the running of the organization by offering suggestions, giving feedback, and sharing their problems and complaints. What is desired according to Likert (1961) is 'participatory management'. All members of the organization participate in the decisions that ultimately affect them; at the level of subordinates. Communication is one of the management tools in this endeavour.

Although the Scanlon plan was developed a long time ago, the context in which it developed has particular lessons for us in contemporary South Africa where greater worker participation in decision-making is often mooted and where unions continue to exert a strong influence. The office based officials are still timid, however in schools, unions have paved the way for participation in decision making. Even though some principals are still autocratic despite all the challenges they face.

The first tenet of the plan is achieved by utilizing an open suggestion system, with a set of 'production committees' throughout the organization (composed of one manager and a small number of representatives elected by the workers) to screen the suggestions.

The suggestions system provides a means for upward feedback from the workers to management; the fact that these messages get through and are acted upon encourages the feeling

that making suggestions is worthwhile. For the first time we have seen a toll free number and information desk set up at eThekweni Region for any stakeholder to use as a means to improve communication, however this has not filtered down to districts particularly the helpdesks. If the help desks in districts can be set up, the Department will yield a positive image. In some districts the problem lies with the floor space.

The systems school of organization theorists focused especially on open systems, because most organizations are relatively 'open'. The more openness a system has, the faster it will adapt to rapid changes in the environment.

In the case of South Africa, this has become a very important requirement as organizations have to adapt to massive, changes in the social structure that derive from the shift from apartheid to democracy, where the role of the employee was that of only carrying marching orders, from their seniors. Education as well, has seen the Department restructuring itself to position itself in accordance with the dictates of the present systems.

The organization is thus viewed as an open system- open to new information, responsive to the environment, dynamic and ever- changing. The Department is initiating changes but their success lies with managers who are supposed to be agents of change. It acknowledges the potential that new information technology and communications have a role in removing boundaries and allowing subsystems to interact better with each other. Except in the case of the Bosberaad where sub-directorates interact formally for a purpose of putting a district action plan, and at management committee meetings. Otherwise on day to day basis interaction of the sub directorate is informal.

The DoE consist of the patterns of formal relationships and duties, job descriptions, formal rules, operating policies, work procedures, compensations and rewards. Organizational structures that consist of those aspects of the patterns of behaviour in the organization are relatively stable and they change only slowly. The patterns of interaction form a communication structure. All systems have some degree of structure. This formal structure within the DoE exists because it helps the Department carry out its goals. Within the districts there will be the line management structure composed from the bottom of the ladder by educators, SMTs Principals, Circuit managers, District managers. From the support structures of the district it will be the first education specialist, the Deputy Chief Education Specialist and Chief Education Specialist.

Even though they were intended to achieve rational efficiency, they could also at times be dysfunctional, as 'bureaucracy' had good intentions, but is often used negatively, suggesting red tape and inefficiency.

3.4 Internal Communication

Internal communication is an integral part of all organizational communication activities as most of them (activities) occur within it. It is both formal and informal. It involves employees communicating with each other, managers informing and giving instructions, and reports being written and studied. Vijialakshmi and Ngobese (2000: 47). The following are the four ways in which organisational communication flow.

3.4.1 Lateral or Horizontal Communication

Horizontal communication refers to the flow of information between specialised sections on the same hierarchical level of the institution. It is designed to ensure or improve coordination of the work effort. Horizontal communication flows in an organization are more frequent than vertical flows. This is because individuals communicate more openly and effectively with their equals than with superiors. The content of messages carried by horizontal flows is mainly of a co-ordinating nature (whereas downward flows are mainly authoritative and upward flows chiefly provide feedback on operational performance).

The CESs interact frequently with one another in tackling issues that need the expertise of the other sub-directorates. Examinations CES will interact more with CES for TLS because they deal with curricular issues. CES-examinations will also liaise frequently with CES- PGSES in dealing with concessions for learners with barriers to learning, as well as with ABET- ECD because all these sub-directorates have something to do with examinations. Otherwise CESs from different sub-directorates would share management problems and how other CESs deal with those problems.

Lateral communication within sub-directorates at eThekweni Region helps in the sharing of insights, methods and problems. At best it co-ordinates the various activities of the organization enabling the various divisions to pool insights and expertise. It can go a long way to building morale and worker satisfaction.

Horizontal communication takes place between staff at the same level. It not only serves as a means of socializing for staff members, but is also essential for integration and co-operation among different Departments within the institution Smit and Cronje (1997: 363-364). Manager,

in their capacity should try to promote communication through horizontal flow as it helps prevent Departments from functioning in isolation.

3.4.2 Upward Communication

According to Vijialakshmi and Ngobese (2000: 47) upward communication refers to messages sent from the lower levels of the hierarchy to the upper levels. This information is usually concerned with job-related activities- what needs to be done, solving problems, making suggestions, measuring success and improving morale. There is often relatively less upward communication in an organization, compared to downward communication. Upward communication in the DoE normally is limited to the immediate supervisor. He is accessible and normally in the same building but is not a decision maker himself. The total set up in the Department of Education with offices in different geographical settings is an impediment to easy flow of upward communication on the part of the rank and files. Even those in the same building with the RSM, hardly get a chance to get to his office as he occupies the furthest office in the upper floors of the building.

Upward communication provides management with the necessary feedback on worker morale and possible sources of dissatisfaction. At the same time it gives subordinates a sense of belonging to and being part of the organization. Above all, it provides management with the opportunity to acquire new ideas from those actually working on the production line, who are SEMs in this case. Written monthly and quarterly reports assist in filling in the RSM with what is happening on the ground. Over and above this the RSM is informed by the directors and CESSs who seat at the MANCOM about issues on the ground. It needs a person with good listening skills to present the message as is. Joyce and Showers (1980: 93-106) state that there are inter alia, three benefits resulting from the involvement or shared decision making. These are feelings of self efficacy, ownership and workplace democracy.

The RSM receives reports that tell him or her primarily what his or her subordinates want him, or her to hear. The upward flow of communication in organizations is noted for spontaneous and full expression. The success of upward communication depends on many factors the corporate culture, the pressure on managers, the climate of opinion, the willingness to share ideas, and often the physical and 'mental' separation between managers and workers, more especially human relatives. It is an important means of providing information alerting managers or superiors about problem areas. However, it is not always easy to achieve this flow as the staff

tends to withhold information from management because of fear of placing their careers at risk, or because of lack of trust.

3.4.3 Downward Communication

Downward communication is the most commonly used in education at eThekweni Region to clarify goals, assists in the induction of new members of staff and serves as a means of keeping staff informed. It lessens distortions in the grapevines if regular, because employees always rely on official statements. Mission statements, policy formulations, memos, instructions, manuals and job descriptions are the most common forms of downward communication Vijialakshmi and Ngobese (2000: 47).

3.4.4 Diagonal Communication

Diagonal communication bypasses the usual 'channels' of communication, whereby the message reaches directly the person or group for whom it is intended. It is important in situations such as emergencies, as it allows for participants to quickly relay messages without having to follow protocol (Atkinson et al; 1993: 123-124). Managers, unfortunately do not inform their staff that this form of communication is acceptable in addressing emergencies. It normally creates tensions between middle managers and senior managers.

3.5 External communication

The flow of information is from an organization to the public. When communicating externally, the SEMs communicate with the parents, company, unions, professional services, suppliers, government agencies, the courts, foreign governments and offices, trade associations, special interest groups, the general public and stakeholders.

A manager in education, communicate in writing, both internally and externally. With increased involvement in projects and courses, every manager can learn to use effective written communication strategies (Ibid).

3.6 Channels of Communication

In this section the two major channels of communication, nonverbal plus verbal communication, as well as written communication are briefly outlined.

3.6.1 Nonverbal plus Verbal Communication

Nonverbal communication is usually associated with most forms of communication, including oral and written forms. It includes "all the elements associated with human

communication that are not expressed orally or in writing. Sometimes it conveys more meaning than words” Moorhead and Griffin, (1995: 355).

3.6.2 Written Communication

Written communication involves the following instruments in an organization: report writing, letter writing, proposals, instructions, letters to the press, advertisements, faxing and electronic mail, writing memorandum, brochures, writing minutes of a meeting, complaint boxes, essays and articles, and notices and circulars. Managers communicate internally and externally.

3.7 Intercultural Communication

Fielding (1995: 54) states that, “Intercultural Communication in a company takes place when a person from one culture communicates or tries to communicate with a person from another culture.” Vijialakshmi and Ngobese (2000: 47) concurs with Fielding 1995 where he says; “Intercultural communication refers to a special type of communication in which people from different cultures have to communicate with each other.” Because people from different cultures have different worldviews, they find it very difficult to understand other people’s ways of thinking. This can create tension and anxiety. People from diverse cultural groupings may attach different meanings to verbal and non-verbal codes, and will therefore have to negotiate meanings carefully. The Department may have to change its views and attitudes to promote intercultural communication. eThekweni Region staff will achieve a better understanding in this regard if they are, as according to Vijialakshmi and Ngobese (2000: 47) :

- Aware that preferred values and behaviour are
- Influenced by culture and are not necessarily “correct”
- Flexible and open to change
- Sensitive to verbal and non-verbal behaviour
- Aware of the values, beliefs, and practices in other cultures; and
- Sensitive to differences among individuals within a culture

The convergence model emphasizes the point that “communication is a transaction in which meaning is created by both sender and receiver working together” according to Fielding (1995: 13). This means that for eThekweni Region communication to be successful, its’ personnel will need to share the same meanings for words, concepts and ideas.

In this model the manager and his staff continue to exchange messages until there is common understanding. Therefore, both the manager and his staff are encoders and decoders of

the messages. As you send messages back and forth, you assume different roles as either sender or receiver. This allows for effective communication.

3.8 Informal Communication

Informal communication springs up whenever an official feels a need to communicate with an individual with whom no formal communication exists. It is observed in cliques, dyads, and significant others groups.

It serves several purposes such as clarification of formal communications, gauging staff concerns and dissatisfactions. However, the disadvantage of informal communication is that it is not a reliable means of communication flow as confidential messages can be conveyed without any validation. Personal biases, gossips and rumours can be transmitted without any checking (Atkinson *et al.* 1993: 123).

Managers at all levels need to master the means of effective communication. This implies that information transmitted through this means has to be validated, or else it could lead to miscommunication within your institution.

3.8.1 The Grapevine

The definition of grapevine, according to the Webster Dictionary, is “a secret means of spreading or receiving information” (Atkinson *et al.* 1993: 123). Deal and Kennedy (1982) claim that this is a primary means of communication as it unites all parts of the organization irrespective of status or position.

The grapevine is one of the most potent forms of communication within organizations. According to organizational theorist, Davis (1997), the grapevine seems most likely to be used when:

- There is great upheaval or change within the organization
- The information is new
- Face to face communication is physically easy
- Workers ‘cluster in clique-groups along the vine’

It seems to flourish where change, ambiguity and organizational secrecy are the order of the day. Perhaps even more striking than its relative grapevine frequency of usage is its reported accuracy. Approximately 75-95% of information is correct (Davis 1997)

- Managers need to understand the role of grapevine in an organization

- Treat it with caution but with respect
- Use it for your own purposes

Informal communication often contributes toward an organization's effectiveness in reaching its goal. It is very common in the Department when somebody is to exit the system or results of interviews are waited for. A lot of speculation happens. It also happens when subordinates want to warn the supervisor of something and do not want to mention names. When he asks how they come to know that, the response will be through the grapevine.

3.9 Communication Networks

A communication network consists of interconnected individuals who are linked by patterned communication flows. Network interactions can be studied and measured, but they are sometimes not obvious to all members of an organization. Nevertheless, they are quite real. The association that holds a network together may be a mutual concern with a common work task, a common liking for or attraction to each other, or mutuality of interest in some topic according (Mersham and Skinner 1999).

This has set certain limits to the way networks have been able to form in the past. Technologies such as e-mail, the Internet, video-conferencing and multiple electronic document sharing have expanded the combinations of networks that may be formed and also satellite, cellular and radio-based technologies provides a new dimension to interpersonal, small and broader group. In the DoE you will find people who are from different sub-directorates, forming a communication network as a result of attraction to each other but also employees from different districts but in the same sub directorate, involved in communication networks.

3.10 Barriers to communication

Barriers to communication can demotivate staff and may vary from institution to institution. As a result managers, strive to ensure that their messages are clear and that barriers are eliminated so that effective communication can take place.

The following list mentions a few barriers:

- Failures to analyze the needs of the receiver
- Poor listening and lack of attention to feedback
- Assuming that the receivers know more than they really do
- Different cultural backgrounds

- Insensitive or poor choice of language by sender or receiver
- Message unclear due to insufficient information
- Language that is too technical for the receiver

Your role as manager demands that you adopt firm measures to ensure that staff members are not demotivated as a result of barriers to communication.

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter different forms of communication have been discussed by the researcher. Internal and external forms of communication have been highlighted. The four types of communication flows were addressed. The levels of communication in the Department formed part of the discussion, in relation to how many layers there are in the DoE. The DoE is viewed as a very autocratic form of leadership because of its bureaucratic nature. Communication is a binding factor which facilitates all other functions of the organization. In the next chapter the researcher will discuss the organisational structure and its relation to organisational communication.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

4.1 Introduction

Structure is the arrangement of components and subsystems in and within an organization. It refers to the patterns and relationships among the sub-directorates in the Department of Education. It reflects relationships in terms of power and status. An organisational structure is commonly manifested as a hierarchy consisting vertically of different levels of authority and horizontally of different units such as branches, divisions or sections as well as functions, products, projects or geographical areas. According to Fielding (1995: 27) "It is a collection of people working together to reach specific goals" Communication is 'the very essence of a social system or an organization.

The Department of Education is characterized by organizational hierarchy embracing line function and staff relationships which cause more complexity and protocols in the ways in which people communicate. The hierarchy structure nonetheless has always been an answer to the undertaking of the myriad of tasks large and small and of ensuring that, the clearly allocated responsibility is not lost beneath a tangle of job responsibilities.

4.2 Organization

According to Mersham and Skinner (1999) an organization is a stable system of individuals who work together to achieve, through a hierarchy of ranks and division of labour, specific goals. It includes the formal hierarchy of authority, inclusive of rules, procedures and other arrangements pertaining to the behaviour of the incumbents of the posts (SAMDI 2003).

Organisational structure is a specific framework of established posts in which people carry out certain actions for the purpose of attaining a common goal. It is a schematic representation in the form of an organisational chart (organogram) each individual in an organization should know the chain of command; who to report to; who to supervise. Ndlovu *et al.* (2000:17). In the eThekwinini region this type of structure exists.

An organisational structure is commonly manifested as a hierarchy consisting vertically of different levels of authority and horizontally of different units such as branches, divisions or

sections, as well as functions, products, projects or geographical areas. At the level of the District there are different sub-directorates as it is, at the Head Office. Authority is placed at the hands of different deputy directors, CESs and, CSEMs. They supervise Deputy Chief Education Specialists. They in turn are supervised by the Directors who report to the Regional Senior Managers. Formal Communication follows the line function, whilst informal communication cuts across sub-directorates at eThekweni Region.

All organisations exist for a certain purpose. For these organisations to realize their purpose or goals, goals must be communicated to all the employees. It is the responsibility of every manager to inform the employees of these goals and they must be given a chance to make the necessary inputs. Inputs in return, in the districts, are made via the districts operational plans where different sub-directorates make their contributions. In some instances, policy and procedure documents are circulated to district offices for inputs by Head Office.

4.3 Purpose of the Organizational Structure

The organisational structure addresses the following;

- That there is no overlapping or duplication of functions
- Tasks are logically grouped
- People are efficiently supervised
- People are effectively utilized
- People get an overall picture of the organization
- There are clear core-functions (main tasks)

A well-detailed structure in Education is meant to improve working relationships between the employers and employees. In the development of an organizational structure people should be more considered than the structure. Therefore, the structure depends on the involvement of people attached to a particular job. Work is divided in such a way that it is intended to motivate people to work with commitment, dedication and enthusiasm. eThekweni Region structure is no exception to this.

There are two types of organizational structure: The formal structure and the flat structure. The formal structure characterized by chain of command and people are responsible to those above them. Flat structures, where there are fewer layers of people, and broader job responsibilities.

The eThekweni structure is a formal structure, characterized by organizational charts and policies. It has clear core-functions for each position and enhances productivity; and develops a united organization.

4.4 Levels of Management

In most large organizations there are different levels of management. The Department has the following three levels of management:

- Top level – policy making
- Middle level – Managing the execution of the policy
- Operating level – Implementing the policy

If communication is not effective upwards and downwards, implementation is likely to be poor. Too many levels in organisations contribute to delays, interferences, total failure, changed, condensed and misinterpretation of communication. According to Bedeian (1993: 532) loss of information sent from top management through five layers of management to operatives was astonishingly 80%.and at the operational level only 20% of that information was understood.

The DoE is highly hierarchical and there are distinct boundaries between levels and between sub-directorates and their components. The structural communication within the Department is formal but that of colleagues is informal. SEMs and other Departmental officials at lower levels tend to be taking orders from above, rather than taking initiatives. Job descriptions supersede creativity.

4.4.1 Top Level

At the top level the Department has the following positions; Superintendent-General, Deputy Director General, Chief Directors and Directors. Top management is responsible for the whole organization therefore it develops the vision and mission of the Department. The final authority and responsibility for executing management processes lies with them.

4.4.2 Middle Level

The middle management is composed of the following positions: Chief Education Specialists (CESs); Deputy Directors; Deputy Chief Education Specialists (DCESs). Middle management is responsible for specific departments and is concerned with implementing policies, plans and strategies. It is concerned with the near future and is continually monitoring environmental forces.

This level is also involved in decision-making. This is the level that decides the type of service and how the product or service is going to reach the final client who is the learner, in the case of the Department of Education.

At this point, it is important to note that other organizations like the DoE have the main structure and sub-structures. Therefore a position in the middle level management is also a top-level in the substructure. The example is:

- The District Manager (middle level in the main structure) is top-level in the District Structure
- The School Principal (middle-level in the district) is top-level in a school

4.4.3 Operating Level

This is the level of the SEMs and principals, where ‘the tyre hits the road’. It is directly connected with where production takes place. These managers are responsible for the daily activities of their departments. To achieve a high level of productivity, they apply policies, procedures and rules. Through their performance they can improve or reduce the organisation’s productivity. They are responsible for the integration of the tools and instruments to meet the needs and wants of the learner. The following structure of the Department was adopted from Nobin (2004).

4.5 Structure

The following graphic represents the line of command of the KZN DoE:

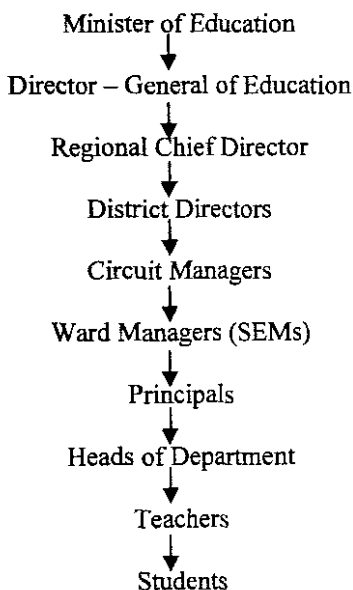


Fig. 1: Line of command in the KZN DoE

A structure is the arrangement of the components of the organisation. It refers to the patterns of relationships among the units in a social organisation, relationships that may be expressed in terms of power, status, or other variables. Structure can be understood in terms of its various dimensions, like the degree of formalisation, centralisation delegation of authority (Mersham and Skinner 1999: 32).

4.6. Organizational Structure

According to Mersham, and Skinner (1999) an organisational structure is the network of formally, deliberately planned and implemented relationships existing among the positions (posts) in an institution. It includes the formal hierarchy of authority, inclusive of rules, procedures and other arrangements pertaining to the behaviour of the incumbents of the posts. SAMDI (2003).

An organisational structure is commonly manifested as a hierarchy consisting vertically of different levels of authority and horizontally of different units such as branches, divisions or sections as well as functions, products, projects or geographical areas. At the level of the District there are different sub-directorates as it is, at the Head Office. Authority is placed at the hands of different deputy directors, CESs and, CSEMs They supervises Deputy Chief Education Specialists .They in turn are supervised by the Directors who report to the Regional Senior Managers. Formal Communication follows the line function, whilst informal communication cuts across sub-directorates at eThekweni Region.

According to Fielding (1995: 27) organisations are a collection of people working together to reach specific goals. For these goals to be achieved they must be known to all the employees. Senior officials must communicate the goals to the employees and they must be given a chance to make the necessary inputs. Inputs in the districts are made through the operational plan where people feel bound to contribute. In some instances procedure documents are circulated from head office to district offices for inputs.

4.7. Organizational Communication

This is the kind of communication that takes place within the organization. It is based on the assumption that, everyone is involved in, and responsible for communication. Its focus is on the behaviours and processes. It is needed to create an effective communication culture in an organization. Fielding (1995: 21) argues that organizational communication “would be particularly concerned with the flow of information- upwards, downwards and sideways. It

would also be concerned with the effects of managerial styles, leadership and motivation on communication.”

The most important characteristic feature of this type of communication is that information flow must be from all directions. Some Head Office Chief Directors are beginning to follow this pattern of information flow. Their meetings are extended down to the level of the district CESs. This set up ensures that communication does filter down to the level of the implementers. In the districts CESs are given a chance to report verbatim about their sub-directorates, despite written reports, in this manner probing questions can be asked and responded to, advices given thus encouraging two way communication.

In an organization in which communication is encouraged, all stakeholders tend to be willing to contribute to the maximization of organizational success because they own the process since they have been part of decision-making. People do not want to see what they have suggested fail, so they work hard to ensure that it becomes successful. They can be creative along the way unlike because they are not given tailor made programmes that allow no creativity.

The contribution of organizational communication to organizational success is best summarized in the words of Graham & McKenna (2000: 50) who argue that well-managed organizational communication provides a unifying “vision” for its members, thus bringing efficiency to the enterprise.

Some managers in the Department of Education do engage people they supervise, in decision making, whilst some managers still lag behind in creating such opportunities and such opportunities need to be extended to principals as well. For this reason, the districts on implementing new policies normally experience resistance from principals who want to contribute positively to the Department and sometimes see loopholes in the policy that they are supposed to implement. If the manager practices an open door policy he will know his organization better than any other manager as issues of interest will be brought to him. If he doesn't open room for participation by staff, he will loose touch with the people he leads. The best example of this is that of President Thabo Mbeki who unexpectedly lost his followers. This could be the reason why the MEC of the DoE allows people to write to her directly. She wants to see the needs of the people addressed.

Based on the argument that has been put forth, it can be said that communication is arguably one of the most important functions in organizational management and development. Puth (1994: 3) posits that communication could be called the lifeblood of organizational

management. Closing doors to the flow of communication is like shutting yourself out of the living world.

Fielding (1995: 4) argues that “effective communication involves a wide range of communication activities to ensure a good upward, downward and lateral or sideways communication”. It is important to note that an organization does not operate within its own environment but also functions within the context of an external environment.

Companies which relate to communities from a position of being superior may adversely affect two-way communication with communities within which they work. This could be the reason why the MEC allows the general public to write to her directly. She redirects the letters to the relevant directorates and demands responses within 24 hours or 14 days if the matter requires investigation. By doing so she is making herself accessible to the external clients. In some instances the DoE has run izimbizo’s and road shows to get to people on the ground. In order for communication to be effective, it must be managed efficiently.

Some people may argue that organizations are not obliged to inform society about what they are doing as an organization. The counter argument is that people are more receptive to change if they are involved.

4.8 Bureaucracy

One means of understanding the nature of formal structure is to look at organizations that possess a very high degree of formalization. Such organizations are called bureaucracies. The French root of ‘bureaucracy’ derives from governmental organizations. Managers are given the authority to enforce the rules by virtue of their position. Managers are often rewarded for complying with the old, and not for thinking, the contemporary business environment requires improvement on current practice.

4.9. Elements of Bureaucratic Structure

Max Weber and other organizational scholars identified the following elements of bureaucracy, that is:

- Rules and regulations;
- Specialized division of organizational tasks;
- A hierarchy of formal positions that contributes to rational efficiency in performing these organizational tasks.

Managers in the Department of Education operate within the confines of these rules and regulations in performing the tasks allocated to the positions they occupy. Rules may become ends in themselves. Limited flexibility and slow decision making in today's turbulent environment can lead to the loss of golden organisational opportunities. Organisations strive to establish duty among their employees and to build organisation image. The DoE in addressing this, has engaged on a vigorous developmental programmes for its employees, using the skills development unit.

This district based skills section liase with employees on the skills they require to be developed on. The Department encourages staff to feel more involved and committed and believes that when people are informed they will be knowledgeable and assertive subsequently make valuable contributions to the Department. They will then portray a positive image of the Department and produce work of good standard.

There are however problems in communication, administrative and effectiveness which are attributed to the size of the Department of Education and the complicated grading in the hierarchic structure.

4.10 Restricted Flows and Information Overload

There is a common perception that communication problems in organisation can simply be solved by more communication. This may sound logical but more than enough information may add confusion to SEMs and principals who have to cascade that information to educators and SGBs. The manager is confronted daily by management information. If this information increases, it may result in information overload. Already with the internet in place the world is being reshaped, there seem to be no way that information can be controlled.

4.11 Opinion Leaders

Within organizations we experience opinion leaders who have a different approach in communicating than that of bureaucratic leaders. Opinion leadership is the ability to informally influence other individuals' attitudes or behaviour in a desired way with relative frequency. Opinion leaders tend to be informal, rather than formal, leaders. Opinion leaders tend to have greater access to external and expert sources of information, and their function is 'to bring the group in touch with this relevant part of its environment' Katz as in (Merham and Skinner 1999)

In comparison with their followers, they are characterized by:

- A wider range of exposure to external and technically competent sources of information;
- Greater accessibility to their followers;
- Higher conformity to the norms of the groups they lead.

The DoE with the new breed of office based officials is experiencing such leaders, who emerge amongst employees. Whenever new information comes up they happen to know before everyone else. In most cases, he is not democratically elected but because he has a lot of information and shed light to unresolved issues he earns trust from colleagues. This leader is connected to higher structures. He is sent to get certain information and does exactly that.

4.12 Cosmopolites

A cosmopolite (or 'cosmopolitan') is an individual who has a relatively high degree of communication with the system's environment. To the extent that an organization has openness, it must have at least some members who are cosmopolites. In most systems, cosmopolites are concentrated at the very top and at the bottom.

SEMs as officials closer to the bottom of the organizational hierarchy also have a certain degree of cosmopolitaness, because they deal with the operational aspects of environmental change. Principals deal directly with customers, with incoming materials and energy, and with other operational-level information. Their cosmopolitaness is at grass-root level. They deal with SGB, s parents, learners, concerned groups and other local structures. In their interactions with communities they strive to portray good image of the Department. The Director General, Chief Director, and RSM on the other hand act as Pro's of the Department. They represent the Department in various intersectional, Departmental, and non governmental organisations. Then they provide valuable information and also negotiate programmes on behalf of the Department. In physical planning the DOE works with Department of Works and have regular meetings. That relationship was negotiated at the highest level.

4.13 Internal Communication

Internal communication may be defined as all kinds of interaction that take place between members of one big or small organization. This type of communication may be looked at from different perspectives. It may be viewed in terms of whether it is formal or informal and it can also be seen as directed from the employer to the workers or from the workers to the employer. This internal communication at the level of the district may come verbally, or telephonically or

in a graphic form. It is used mainly to inform employees of issues pertaining to the climate of that relevant office.

4.13.1 Employee Communication

Communication is a fundamental component of management. It should be viewed as a contributing partner with other key staff functions influencing employee understanding of both business goals and public relations issues. In the job description of managers' communication is never left out.

4.13.2 Commitment by Top Management

This is essential as is their participation and support of the communication process at all levels of the organization. An overall company policy on organizational communication and definitive guidelines for managers and supervisors are also absolutely essential. Top management must be committed to open, honest communication.

4.13.3 Communication Strategy

Each and every organization needs to have its own communication strategy. Communication must be a planned process—strategy—involving both communication professionals and management people. Development of a strategic plan, including short and long term goals, is necessary to put the management communication function professionally on par with other management functions.

Ideally, the plan should be revised each year. Either towards the end of the current year or beginning of the following year and as districts and regions holds bosberaad to review and plan for the following year, communication strategies should also be reviewed. Communication professionals are yet to be seen in the DoE.

4.13.4 Managers Are the Key to Success

Managers are the key conduits and catalysts for effective communication and the system must recognize their need for information, training and rewards for good communication performance. Top executives should set the example by being accessible, sharing important information and encouraging the upward flow of information and ideas even if negative. Above all they need to ensure that ideas and criticism are acted upon or transmitted to the right persons for appropriate action. This is what the MEC does in the DOE on letters and e-mails that land on her desk. She redirects them to all concerned sub-directorates and the line function. The Director General also asks for reports from the levels concerned. A provision for upward feedback is also

provided in the Performance Measurement Development System (PMDS) for departmental officials, for SGB meetings are held for them and for other stakeholders there have been *Izimbizo* run for them.

4.13.5 Priority Issues

These should be the core content of the management communication programme and should be discussed in an open and understandable manner through various forms of communication. Communication in the *eThekweni* Region follows protocol to supervisors at every level, from Principal, to the SEM, to the CSEM, then to the Director, finally to the RSM of *eThekweni* Region. In instances of integrating programs subordinates at the level of *bosberaad* are motivated to form linkages and work together around that. Matters of staff well-being should get the attention of the top management.

4.13.6 Regular Evaluation

The communication process should undergo regular evaluation to prove its worth in terms of employee management relations as well as employee performance and awareness of key public issues. The *eThekweni* Region communicates mainly through circulars with its employees. There are leaders and managers who are reluctant to read documents and will miss out on policy issues. Hence a certain percentage of principals in their questionnaires responses advised that SEMs should clarify circulars for them. May be the language used in circulars for some, form the barrier in communication.

It is essential that the communication function be tested periodically to determine its effectiveness and to give direction for improvements. The Department runs short of this process of self evaluation to improve its communication process. Several studies have been conducted in this area in the Department. This study and many others are responding to this call. A number of SEMs and principals still do not have e-mail facilities in their offices. Schools, circuits, districts and regions are guided by head office on a large scale on protocol as the means of Departmental communication policy.

4.13.7 Employee Communication Needs and Expectations

Many professional organizations conduct surveys on a regular basis to monitor effectiveness of their internal communications. Both local and international researchers reveal the following general trends:

- the majority of the workforce is concerned about a lack of information about their employing organization, including where the company is headed and the reasoning behind decisions.
- there is generally a failure to encourage a free exchange of information among employees and Departments.
- there is little participatory management taking place within organizations.
- there is still a preponderance of top-down communications rather than bottom-up communications.
- the grapevine remains the single most influential tool in disseminating both personal information and company news of a sensitive nature.
- with regard to the communication needs and expectations of employees there is a preference for one-on-one communication in all key areas, in the conveying of expectations for performances, rules and regulations, strategies and goals, safety and productivity advice and benefits information.
- the preferred sources of organizational information for employees are first, the immediate supervisor, secondly, small-group meetings, and thirdly, senior executives. The size, the levels of the DoE and the geographic position of the sparsely spread offices makes it difficult for senior executives to frequently touch base with all offices on the hierarchal strata.
- the forms of communication that need most improvement have been identified as those to and from top executives, those coming from immediate supervisors, and the orientation programmes. Although formal induction mentoring happens at the level of the schools, it is a rare find to office based officials. They find feet as they get along with the job.
- the information that is of particular interest to employees has been identified as organizational plans for the future, productivity improvements, and personnel policies and practices. This depends on the immediate supervisor's open-mindedness in the districts. He arranges with relevant sub-directorates heads that are experts in particular fields to come and address people he supervises.

4.13.8 Printed and Graphic Communication

Employee publications (house journals, staff or employee newsletters and reports to employees) are very important communication tools. Employee publications should have three definite characteristics. They must be informative; educational; and entertaining whether the

publication belongs to a large or small organization, or just one of the branches in a group, the objectives for communicating with staff should be the following: to foster a feeling of unity; to keep employees informed of company activities; to enhance employee understanding of company operations, departments and divisions.

Verbal interpretation is done at different levels. To discuss major policy changes, compensation policies, management changes, new activities, new products, and company benefits; to show the company's involvement in community affairs, to offer useful information, e.g. tax tips, preventive health measures, and financial advice; to improve productivity and instill a strong awareness and understanding of the importance of quality in all elements of the production process. This can be achieved by educating each employee about what productivity is and motivating each by showing 'what's in it for him or her'. After all, productivity and quality are the keys to job security, as well as improved and expanded fringe benefits (Skinner and Von Essen 1988: 121). Education can benefit a lot from this. The head office communication section produces a quarterly news letter which is circulated to the whole province. A number of educators do not know local circuit and district officials.

4.14 Types of publications

Basically there are three types of publications, discussed below.

4.14.1 Internal

Usually called a staff newsletter or staff journal, this publication is intended for the staff and created by the staff. It is usually published as a tabloid although some companies prefer an A4 publication. It explains the organization to its members seeks to improve internal employee relationships with management and generally attempts to strengthen the company spirit through shared information and achievements. Frequency is imperative and while a quarterly publication is acceptable, the more frequent the better, preferably monthly. Introduction of news programs in the Department can be made public to a number of employees if staff news letters are frequent e.g. the districts have now employed employee assistance practitioners but the majority of workers are not aware because it has not yet been launched.

4.14.2 External

This publication is usually made available to clients and has proved to be an effective means of communicating the company's products, people and projects, as well as being a type of support to the marketing efforts. Frequency is not a critical factor but presentation is important.

4.14.3 Combination

Normally referred to as the house journal or house magazine, this publication is usually available to members of staff as well as to those outside the organization, including clients, government, suppliers, shareholders, pensioners and the press. It may even be distributed internationally. Published at least quarterly, the preferred is a glossy A4, although some organizations use a glossy tabloid and make considerable use of colour photography.

4.14.4 Annual Report and Staff Employee Report

Staff often receives a great deal of information from things such as press releases and in particular the organization's Annual Report. Since South Africa's political transition there has been a shift in the emphasis of organizational communication. While the external focus remains important, more emphasis is being placed on the content of internal communications. At the end of the financial year a full report is drafted and presented at portfolio meetings. The same report can be made available on the internet for all employees and other stakeholders to view.

Globalization and new technologies are fairly recent phenomena and have had little exposure in South African internal organizational communications. Globalisation means that competition comes not only from among South African competitors, but also increasingly from competitors around the world. The DoE should be on the lead with the teaching and use of computers skills from the level of schools to office based officials if we want South Africa to compete fairly with the global world. A start for departmental officials has been made and the Department has provided some schools which have electricity with office computers.

4.14.5 Value Added Statements

In South Africa, given the mistrust and misunderstanding between organized labour, company managements and government communication needs to address the question of companies both as wealth creators and fair wealth distributors' effectively (Schuitena 1998 in SAMDI 2003) it should outline the big three:

- vision-Where is the company going?
- Mission-How is it going to get there?
- values -How does it conduct its business?

Value-added statement would minimally contain information on: Salaries i.e. fixed monthly payment and wages fixed weekly payment. Overall, the staff report should address those

issues over the past financial year which most impact on staff. The Value Added statements should:

- Report on the state of the industry or sector in which the company does business
- Contextualize the business; that is, indicate how it is doing within the local and international industry. This is a type of brief SWOT analysis
- Report on divisions
- State financial position of the company over the past year

The Department adheres to this principle by reporting about its performance. The system of reporting is aligned to the budget allocation thereby also reporting about the finances that were granted and used. Annual report like monthly and quarterly reports are informed by what happens in the sub-directorates and directorates of the Department.

4.15 More Forms of Written and Graphic Communication

When suitable applicants are employed, the Department provides them with; letters of employment, of placement, termination of service are common letters to individuals. The Department of Education has an obligation to alert its employees who exit the system for any reason with a letter of termination and keep copies. The termination letters are channelled through the immediate supervisor.

4.15.1 Bulletin Boards

One of the least expensive, most neglected, and yet most effective medium of group communication with employees is the bulletin board. Properly located and supervised, bulletin boards command employee attention, are read by more people than would listen to public address broadcasts, and are looked at a number of times by individual employees. They should be located where they can be seen and read conveniently, in rest rooms, beside passenger elevators, and in the cafeteria where applicable. Material should be changed every week, and boards should be kept free of obsolete notices. In fact, there should be a distinct physical separation of official information (need to know) and informal information (nice to know). It is no longer in use in some offices but it was once one of the most used form of communication. Circulars, telephones and face to face communication have taken over.

4.15.2 Reading Racks

An inexpensive medium of communication with employees is the reading rack filled with booklets about corporate affairs: political, economic and social subjects; health, safety, hobbies,

cooking, sport, and other matters of interest to employees. The reading rack may be quite an answer to issues of social interest in the Department but policies may be at risk of being removed from the rack by individuals before others read them.

4.15.3 Suggestion Schemes

Employees can participate directly in company methods of operation by reducing costs, productivity levels and reducing wastage, while at the same time benefiting financially and with prestige from their efforts. A suggestion box is functional in other districts but not all districts have the structure to deal with them. When drafting rules for the scheme, it is essential to prohibit 'gripe or complaint suggestions. There is recourse for complaints through the immediate supervisor, if not satisfied or he is the cause of the problem, inform him of that you are moving to the next level. Whether this model is effective or not, it depends on the integrity of the senior manager.

4.16 New Technologies in Communication

Previously the graphic forms of communication were mostly used competing with the telephone at the most. With the present times we have seen electronic media taking the centre stage in business. Education being one of the biggest Departments of the state, has realized that it has to follow the latest trends in dealing with its information processing and dissemination, and that is electronic media. The new media technologies that have evolved have the potential to radically alter the scope, speed, and precision, in the manner in which information is disseminated and retrieved. For this reason we must take heed of them.

4.16.1 Audiovisuals, Videos and Films

These can all play an effective role in employee communication. They can be used as part of the induction programme to inform new workers about company history, organization structure, products and employee benefits. These media could be very cost effective and also effective in inducting the big numbers that are employed at the same or different times in the Department. Year in and year out masses of employees are employed by eThekweni region and other regions, therefore, solutions to eThekweni region can benefit other regions as well. Suggestions to senior management to this effect are to be made under recommendations.

4.16.2 Internal Television Programmes

Closed circuit internal television broadcast describing company progress and operations are used to communicate with employees in large corporations. Managers can exchange

information with members of their Departments through the use of electronic meetings. Responses are presented by participants onto their computer screens; these in turn are anonymously displayed on a projection screen in the room (Lowery 1985). Better than calling employees from the whole province, region or district, this could be used and can cut down on transport costs where a number of employees drive for a meeting up to Pietermaritzburg.

4.16.3 Computer Conferencing

Here all members that are involved in the conference log into their computers and onto the internet. The document or the issues to be discussed would appear on the monitor of each computer. They could then read it, and make changes and suggestions while the change occurs on all monitors. Such facility could allow greater contribution from the rank and file and promote effective two way communication in the DoE.

4.16.4 Audio Conferencing

Audio conferencing is a business meeting run through technology connected with or used in the broadcasting. This can be arranged with and by Telkom. It is a bit expensive if used for a small group.

4.16.5 Telephone and Voicemail

The voicemail service allows one to leave a message for colleagues when they are not available or are unable to pick up the phone. This system is often used by SEMs with principals and by CSEMs with SEMs.

4.16.7 Internet

The internet has become, in a very short time, the ultimate tool in interactive communication in the corporate sector. The communication barriers of time and space have been obliterated through the use of on-line technology and with its multi-media capabilities the World Wide Web has captured the imagination computer users globally. With this tool of communication certain sections of the Department have this facility but the majority is still wanting. Those who have, can access information easily. An audit of those who have access and those that don't is needed so as to make provision for those who are in need.

4.17 Organisational Change in South Africa

In South Africa, organizations are bombarded by demands to change their way of operation by different structures. They have to adapt to new labour legislation that favours

employees much more than in the past, and affirmative action is a business imperative that impacts on all considerations of new and existing business activities. A number of organisations including education were caught off guard. The pressure from unions made the Department implement these changes through the set policies. The Department began to treat unions as partners in education and interacted with them on issues of concern.

The DoE has engaged in restructuring more than twice. Restructuring process has to be properly communicated and properly understood by employees to avoid rejection. The second one nearly suffered resentment as this was not properly communicated, up until a director from the head office visited regions and levelled the plain field.

The DoE has to adapt to the requirement of moving from a base of largely unskilled workforce to one that is trained to use modern technologies. They have to adjust to the global trend of overall 'job shedding' against a background of extremely high levels of unemployment.

The challenge to management is to keep the organization in a favourable equilibrium within its environment. As far back as the 1990s the DoE sent its employees for computer courses. The effectiveness of these trainings has been affected by the demands of the work they do and some having to stop before completion of the course. In some instances because of budget constraints managers could not be provided with computers in their offices. After 1994 South Africa experienced a lot of changes following its democratic rule. New legislation were instituted and South Africa was exposed to globalization.

With change and opportunities presenting themselves, the problem is that resources are almost always limited, while opportunities calling for them are almost always unlimited. As the case with electronic communication systems, whilst a need for them is high and is acknowledged, budgetary constraints make it difficult for the Department to move as fast as it would love to.

4.17.1 Transformation

Only recently have South Africans developed a culture that responds to consensus, so it is important for the organizational communications practitioner to consolidate and continue with this new cultural initiative. However, it is human nature to resist transformation. People reject transformative change when:

- they see no benefit
- they do not feel involved

- they do not understand it
- they do not believe in the value of change

Whether it is management or workers who eye off each other's positions on different issues, fear of change is driven by 'what could go wrong as opposed to what could go right'.

When an organization changes its mind as a single entity, it is the beginning of transformation. There are three parts to changing the mind of an organization. The first part is mobilization. This is the process of getting all sectors of the organization to 'speak their minds' and identify the problems. The second part is the creation of consensus and a shared vision during the period of change. The third is implementing the measures that will be taken to complete the transformation process.

When the first step of the process is ignored, as is often the case, the situation is characterized by unguided and ad hoc impulses of leaders of conflicting with the resistance of the rank and file. Most often, the owners and drivers of change are senior company executives, who are forced to embark on change by external factors such as increased global competition, increased input costs or falling prices for products and services, unbundling, or refocusing on core activities. Typically they follow a period of vacillation with radical action. Senior company executives decide, without consultation, what the changes should be and when they should happen, and fire off directives to middle managers who struggle to cope.

They must drive the change process through and are not given an option to be part of the decision-forming process. Often middle and line managers lack full information. Organizational communication is limited. They are given only facts considered 'necessary' by top management, usually after rumours and leaks have spread wildly through the company 'grapevine'. The most common phenomenon of organizational change is the pathetic picture of middle managers having to confess to subordinates who look up to them that they don't actually know what is going to happen.

During the down-sizing and consequent retrenchment period, middle managers picked up the hatchet on behalf of top management. They conveyed the bad tidings, sometimes to their most loyal and able colleagues. At the same time they had to motivate and reassure those who remained. All this was achieved through engagement with relevant structures.

Generally CESSs, CSEMs, and SEMs are not trained to deal with change. Many in the DoE come from professional background, with little training in the social sciences such as communication, presentation and negotiation. SEMs and principals concentrate on efficiently

doing what has already been decided and must be done. They ensure output, chasing production targets, and deadlines. Senior management, on the other hand, claim for themselves the decisions connected with fundamental change. They determine the model that must be followed and delegate middle managers at a lower operational level to co-ordinate transformation projects but the power to do so is temporarily 'loaned'.

Therefore, middle management is an 'at risk' level when top management have no idea how to execute the change process and through uncertainty engage in 'flip-flop' decision-making. Suggestions from line managers often get bogged down in board and executive indecisiveness.

4.17.2 Communication Objectives

The following objectives could play a significant role in introducing smooth change in any organisation including the Department of Education:

- Educate and inform all stakeholders of the restructuring and transformation change drivers, changes that will take place, and the impact of these changes
- Establish a positive attitude toward change by emphasizing the role various stakeholders play
- Build trust in the organization by addressing transformation and restructuring initiatives in an open and honest manner

4.17.3 Target Markets

The communication strategy will target three key market groupings:

- Internal stakeholders i.e. office based offices and organized labour
- External stakeholders
- Influencers and decision-makers

4.17.4 Intercultural and Communication

Intercultural communication refers to communication in which people from different cultures have to communicate with one another. It promotes harmony among people of different culture groups working together. It facilitates positive interaction and participation of people from diverse cultures. It reduces superiority complexes that may exist within organisations. It promotes tolerance and sensitivity to other people world's views, beliefs and values (Vijialakshmi and Ngobese 2000).

4.17.5 Communicating Across Culture

Communication is the negotiation of meaning to achieve shared understanding. However, this does not mean that interaction always results in agreement or compliance.

Within an organization, communication flows from individual to individual in face-to-face and group settings. Such flows are termed interpersonal communication and can vary from direct orders to casual expressions.

The problems that arise when managers attempt to communicate with other people can be traced to perceptual differences and interpersonal style differences. The primary way managers relate to and learn from the environment (including the people in that environment) is through information received and transmitted.

4.18 Conclusion

The researcher discussed the various forms of communication that are prevalent in organizations. Some are used by the Department, others not. These are useful in the cooperate world and are inexpensive. The Department will have to identify those that it can afford to use and make use of them to improve communication. Things like bulletin boards located where they can be seen and read conveniently can be read by more people at permitting times, reading racks may be quite an answer to issues about corporate affairs: political, economic and social subjects. Employees in this way come to know their Department in and out.

Presently if your manager is ignorant about issues of employees' welfare, he is regarded as a person who does not care for the wellbeing of employees. Probably he suffered from lack of comprehensive induction and is not aware that people from different sub-directorates are invited by him to do presentations to his subordinates about what they offer and changes thereto. Audiovisuals, videos and films can be of great assistance in the induction process.

About staff employee report, at the end of the financial year a full report is drafted and presented at portfolio meetings. The same report can be made available on the internet for all employees and other stakeholders to view. By doing that, the Department can cut down on the duplicating expenses. Target markets have been clearly defined. Intercultural communications from diverse cultures, which reduce superiority complexes that may exist within organisations, have been discussed to put value to diversity workshops that are normally run for departmental officials. The chapter that follows presents different leadership styles and their impact on organisational communication.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

5.1 Introduction

The new approach to leadership and management challenges education leaders to change from apartheid values to the values enshrined in the constitution. The challenge is to move from the more autocratic rule-bound approaches that the previous government foisted on civil servants and society generally to more democratic, accountable and equitable forms of leadership.

Approaches to management have varied radically in their purposes and have altered scientifically over time. Hierarchies of authority, division of labour and adherence to rules and spans of control are now regarded as denying the flexibility and responsiveness that provide the necessary conditions for effective leadership. However SEMs still work under these conditions.

5.2 What is Leadership

According to Yukl (1994: 2) “leadership has been defined in terms of traits, behaviour influence over other persons, patterns of interaction, role of leaderships, occupation of an administrative position and the perception of others regarding legitimacy of influence”.

According to the *Collins Dictionary* (1978) leadership is the position or function of a leader or the ability to lead. According to Van der Walt and du Toit (1997: 196) leadership is the process of influencing others to achieve certain objectives. It is also the process of leading and inspiring workers to carry out task-related activities of the group. Leaders use their power and influence to do this.

5.3 Leadership Styles

The essence of leadership is influence over followers. The way in which followers are influenced, depends on leadership style. Beach (1985: 337) defines style as “the behaviour of the leader what he or she does, what he or she emphasizes, and how he or she deals with

subordinates". According to Yukl (1994: 7) leadership may be classified into one of the following approaches, namely *liassez-faire* leadership, autocratic leadership, bureaucratic leadership, democratic leadership, team and one-to-one leadership.

5.3.1 Liassez-faire Leadership

This type of leader does not attempt to control or lead his subordinates. A degree of responsibility is accepted, but there is virtually no communication between the leader and his subordinates, the latter being called upon to set their own objectives, but no one encouraging them to attain these objectives. In an organisation this type of leadership often results from an outstanding worker who does not have the ability or does not wish to fill a managerial position, being appointed to such a position Andrews (1986: 246-7). Promotion to leadership positions in the past has been based on this principle.

Educators who produced good results were rewarded by being moved to the level of the principals however the majority of these principals did produce good results in their schools. The other side of the coin is also true. With particular reference to this case one may be tempted to believe that leaders are born not made. The same applied to principals whose schools produced good results, some of them became SEMs.

5.3.2 Autocratic Leadership

Autocratic and authoritarian are usually synonymous terms implying a high degree of direction from the leader and minimum or no participation in planning and control on the part of the subordinates. The style is associated with the terms leader-centered and directives which are sometimes used synonymously. In the autocratic leadership pattern, the leaders spend a high portion of their time giving orders, making disruptive commands and giving non-objective praise and criticism (Beach 1985: 338).

5.3.3 Bureaucratic Leadership

In bureaucratic leadership the leader's behaviour is characterized by a high degree of reliance on rules and regulations and by the use of procedures to which leaders and subordinates subscribe. It implies a strong element of autocratic leadership and initiating structure. SEMs and other managers in the Department normally follow this pattern because of their position in the Departmental structure. They sometimes refer to themselves as conveyor belts for theirs is to take information from the top and send that to principals and vice versa.

5.3.4 Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership sometimes implies a high degree of group participation in decision-making .It often implies a high degree of support from the leader, but it does not imply that the subordinates make decisions about what the objectives of the organization will be. The terms employee-centered, equalitarian, consultative, and participative are often used more or less simultaneously with democratic leadership.

Therefore, democratic is a fairly loose term, and actual behaviour must be examined to determine what is meant in a particular instance. The degree of democracy in a situation can be judged by the number and significance of the decisions made by subordinates. With the SEMs this is not easy as they implement policies so they have to lead by example and stick to book.

5.3.5 Team and One-to-One Leadership

Some forms of democratic leadership tend to involve more extensive interaction within the team than is the case under autocratic styles. The latter places a much greater reliance on downward communications and one-to-one interaction among superiors and subordinates. The team leadership pattern involves relatively frequent group meetings of a consultative, problem solving nature. SEMs are much involved in meetings which are less consultative. Some CSEMs do involve SEMs particularly in solving problems that affect the circuit. They work together and come up with solutions. SEMs do network on their own with regard to matters that are peculiar to them.

In most cases it is found that the laissez-faire type of leadership results in chaos, confusion, conflict and frustration. Democratic leadership is more favourable because there is a high degree of participation and support leading to increases productivity as opposed to autocratic leadership which results in negative attitudes. People working under an autocratic leader are subjected to authoritarian rule and are always dissatisfied. The synergistic links that are forged from relationships between people who work as a cohesive unit are important for growth and development in an organization (Nobin 2004: 6).

5.4 Contingency Model of Leadership

There are four most influential contingency models of leadership. Fielder's contingency model, Hersey and Blaclarets situational model, Hanes path-goal model and the Vroom-Yetton-Jago-leader-participation model. The basic feature of the situational or contingency theory of leadership is that it seeks to move Managers SEM from their dependency on practices that are

the product of precedence, habit and tradition by developing models of analysis and enquiry that are aimed at exposing and examining the beliefs, values and assumptions implicit in the theoretical framework through which superintendents organize their experiences.

The above approaches to leadership help to determine what kinds of leader traits, skills and the behaviours are relevant.

5.5 Leadership and Management Environment

Superintendents of Education Management are operating in one of the most dynamic and complex environments in KwaZulu-Natal, where many variables have an enormous influence on their main task, that of achieving Departmental goals and objectives (Nobin 2004). SEMs therefore lead in directing the activities and performance of subordinates (principals of schools). In their management task, they have to see to it that things are done and are done effectively and efficiently. This therefore, means that one of the basic tasks of the SEM is to frequently liaise with the principals and also senior officials of the Department. According to Snyder (1983), a supervisor who provides more accurate and timely types of communication enhances the work environment and thereby is likely to increase employee's commitment to the organization. If the day-to-day management functions are not there to give structure and support, the leader will fail in performing his duty that of guiding his staff towards the fulfilment of educational goals. Sterling and Davidoff (2000: 12) agree on that leadership and management are inseparable. In setting up the study, the researcher provided for the participation of SEMs, principals and SGBs.

Research conducted by EDUPOL (1994) indicates that while there may be few leaders who practise a more open style of management in the education system in South Africa, in general the system is characterized by authoritarian hierarchical, non consultative, and non participative ethos, which may permeate new institutional arrangements and prevent the development of effective education and training management practices. This approach dominated during the apartheid era and infuses current thinking of some education managers. Far reaching change is required to address the strong bureaucratic controls over the educational system.

A manager is a person in a formal position involving some responsibility for the work of other people and for other resources (Ackroyd *et al.* 2000: 182). These officials are implementors of policies formulated by politicians and represent the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in the implementation of such, who is accountable to the politicians. He has to deliver as according to the promises made. Some leaders still do not understand that they should engage with these

politicians at the local level. The reason for this could be that, leaders in education during the apartheid era were trained in rigid, bureaucratic management skills with the aim of keeping schools “under control”.

Often, people were promoted for their willingness to cooperate in implementing apartheid policies in schools than their leadership potential. Followers were not supposed to question anything or make inputs. The legacy of this approach still exists within South African educational institutions even in the process, of the restructuring of provincial educational institutions.

May (1998) marked the beginning of a new information order in South Africa, which came to be known as Government communication information services (GCIS). This is a system of government communication headed by a secretariat. The Secretariat has a provincial and local liason section.

It works closely with communicators of the nine (9) provincial governments. Section 16 of the Bill of Rights in our constitution guarantees citizens freedom of speech. Citizens have a right not only to receive information about government, but also to communicate their views and activities themselves; hence subordinates in Departmental organizations need to do the same and similar liason structures should filter down to the lowest level of the education Department. These structures will ensure that subordinates genuinely air their views without any inhibitions as they will tend to do, in the presence of their bosses, thus telling him what he wants to hear.

In defining leadership, interaction between the leader and the subordinates is emphasized. The CES, CSEM, SEM should maintain the balance within the groups they lead and ensure that each person in the group knows his task and role. It is a fact that some people resent change as confirmed by Meyer in the Mercury, December, 2007.

5.5.1 Intrapersonal Communication in the Organization

Intrapersonal Communication starts within an individual. SEMs and principals must be in line with the corporate culture of the DoE, its mission and vision. They should feel that there is a guaranteed and secure future for them within that environment. For the education leader to perform his duties well he has to reflect to his personality, values behaviour and leadership styles as it is their own character that is critical in influencing others to follow them. A positive self-image helps us to work confidently with others, but a negative self- image might cause us to perform below potential and make us defensive. This is known as self-fulfilling prophecy

according to (Fielding 1995: 97). The SEM should understand that his staff may differ from him because of their frame of references, past experiences, values, beliefs attitudes and personalities.

5.5.2 Interpersonal Communication in the Organization

To promote good human relations within an organization, there must be communication between managers and subordinates and among peers. If there are good relations amongst staff members, the organisation is likely to achieve high productivity and thus good reputation of the organization. The environment in which the Department of Education operates is such that it does not encourage upward communication even though tools such as suggestion box are provided.

5.5.3 Intraorganisational Communication

Communication can be formal or informal. Formal communication can be in the form of instructions, memoranda, letters, and reports. Informal communication can be in the form of the grapevine, which is the most used method in any organization.

5.5.4 Hierarchies in the Organization

Communication in an organization follows a certain pattern. It is disseminated in a hierarchical pattern. The Regional Senior Manager (RSM) in the organization holds a senior position and is responsible for top management. Under him/her there are directors. Sometimes these hierarchical levels in an organization affect the interpersonal relations of staff members or employees. This structure controls the channels of communication. In an organization, information proceeds formally in critical and lateral forms and through the grapevine.

Communication from superiors to subordinates should:

- be specific (what is required, how it will be done, what time frames exist and what results are expected)
- allow for regular re-assessment and feedback
- result in mutual respect and congratulations on successfully completed jobs

The RSM in the DoE likewise liaises with Directors in the different sub-directorates. He seldom communicates with officials at the lowest levels.

5.6 Managerial Styles and Interpersonal Communication

The day-to-day activities of managers place a high value on effective interpersonal communications. Managers provide information which must be understood; they give commands and instructions which must be obeyed and learned; and they make efforts to influence and

persuade which must be accepted and acted on. Thus, the way in which managers communicate, both as senders and receivers, is crucial for obtaining effective performance. Principals confirmed this in chapter seven when in one of their responses suggested that they need SEMs to clarify circulars that they are supplied with. Theoretically, managers who desire to communicate effectively can use both exposure and feedback to enlarge the area of common understanding. Smit and Cronje (1997: 368) outline the four managerial styles in interpersonal communication:

5.6.1 The four different Types

The four different types of management styles and interpersonal communication are discussed here under. They are:

5.6.1.1 The A-Type Manager

The A-Type is generally autocratic and negative, unwilling to use exposure and feedback. If an organization has a large number of such managers in key positions, then we would expect to find poor and ineffective interpersonal communications and a loss of individual creativity. A-Type managers often display the characteristics of autocratic leaders. Most directors and CEOs at the level of districts practice the open door policy. For they have to plan together with people they lead and have to get advice where they experience problems with regard to policies they are implementing.

5.6.1.2 The B-Type Manager

B-Type manager finds it difficult to express feelings, is unwilling to be open with subordinates, subordinates tend to be suspicious of B-Type managers who in spite of receiving feedback, contribute nothing to ideas and opinions. Some managers because of their previous grooming can still not divorce themselves from the practices of the past, where a manager was an authority figure and nothing else.

5.6.1.3 The C-Type Manager

The C-Type manager rejects the ideas and opinion of others, is self-centered and not really interested in other people. Such a manager creates uncertainty and even hostility. This manager only believes in himself and has an unacceptable self regard in the workplace. They are the masters of their own downfall.

5.6.1.4 The D-Type Manager

The D-Type manager strikes a balance between exposure and feedback to increase the open area. Such a manager has a positive self-image, is confident, readily communicates ideas

and opinions, and is interested in feedback. This manager practices democratic/behavioral leadership style.

Autocratic managers create a difficult working environment which leads to disharmony.

5.6.1.5 Team Development

Team building is a concerted effort in cementing individual strengths and competencies in achieving a common vision. It is not a once off activity, to solve organizational problems or a group of people finding themselves suddenly thrown together in a common situation or institution. Employees at eThekweni are appointed from all over the country. Some are new incumbents; others are promoted or displaced from their previous workstations. All these employees bring with them baggage made up of varied experiences, different cultures and different perceptions, and high degree of anxiety suspicion and mistrust.

“Managing requires that managers set aside their egos to encourage and develop the work of others. It requires ‘a big picture,’ and a team perspective, rather than an individual perspective” (Brown *et al.* March 1988). With new vacancies created by the new organogram and people being realigned to new positions as a result of restructuring a lot of team building became necessary. There was lot of suspicions when some smaller components were grouped with bigger components. Managers had to work towards sense of belonging, commitment and motivation.

5.6.2 Ineffective Meetings

A lot of time is spent on ineffective and inconclusive meetings. The main reason for having meetings is to utilize the collective skills of a group of people whilst working on a common problem or opportunity. All too often, meetings do not use these skills. Meetings are often seen by management as an opportunity to lay down the law rather than to use the resources of the team.

5.6.3 Duplication

Duplication happens when there is no clear understanding of roles and responsibilities, and then the job often gets done twice or not at all.

5.7 Elimination of Communication Breakdown

The following factors need to be born in mind in the elimination of communication break down in the DoE as, without them the organization will experience communication barriers.

- **Conducive communication** refers to the degree to which an organization allows and encourages a free flow of information between employees.
- **Healthy climate** refers to the quality of the information shared between employees, namely, the quality of the content.
- **Quantity of information** provided by education senior managers has to be adequate for people to perform their jobs with sufficient knowledge, understanding and confidence. Too little information exchanged between employees can be frustrating confusing; can lead to error and incomplete results which in turn can promote mistrust of superiors and ill feelings amongst colleagues. Sherman *et al.* (1996: 536) maintains that no aspect of human resource management is as persuasive as communication.

5.8 Conclusion

The principal objective of this chapter was to discuss the different leadership and management styles and their impact on communication, and on service delivery, as this forms the gist of the study. Leadership is viewed as one of the most important functions of management. A positive self- image helps leaders and managers to work confidently with others, but a negative self- image might cause them to perform below potential and make their supervisees defensive. The styles of management and leadership of the CSEM and the SEM has a great impact on the performance of the circuit and schools. Bennis (1998) alludes to the fact that the quality of life is dependant on the quality of leaders.

Team development is critical as most of the employees at eThekwin Region are appointed from all over the country. They come with different levels of development. Some of them are newly appointed incumbents, completely new in the field. CSEMs and SEMs therefore have to develop interpersonal relationships between themselves and people they lead. They must also create a working climate that will allow all supervisees to work to their full potential.

A clarification of different leadership styles was given, and how these leadership styles influence performance and productivity. The leadership style used differentiates one leader from another one. The chapter that follows deals with research methods used in this study.

In the next chapter the researcher presents the methods of research used to realize the objectives of the study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

A survey was conducted to contribute to the body of knowledge of communication.

According to McCurdy and Cleary (1984: 53) the aim of the research should be to build the knowledge base of a subject.

Marias (1993), states that the substance of the reality that is being studied plays a vital role in determining the data, sources, and methods for collecting data. (Bell 1994: 325) however, observes that methods are often not justified by the context of the research project, but are imposed in an arbitrary fashion called 'tyranny of the traditional scientist approach.

Marais (1993: 118) argues that, it is also possible to focus on what he calls 'the second order of reality' namely the theories, models, concepts and other constructs that are used in a survey. The researcher in this study used both the qualitative and the quantitative research methods. Qualitative research takes an interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter through the study of phenomena in their natural settings, thereby attempting to make sense of or interpret such phenomenon in terms of the meanings that people bring to them Dentin and Lincoln (1994).

Qualitative research recognizes that there may be a variety of phenomena that are missed, if we restrict people to forced choice answers. Rather, qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews, case studies or focus groups promote the researcher's ability to capture the perspective of the respondents which in turn gives us new information that can be used to develop new or revised theories and constructs as called for by Trickett *et al.* (1993), Harvey (1989) and Lincoln (1993). Qualitative research methods are least prescriptive Eisner (1998).

Quantitative research method seeks explanations and predictions that will generalize to other persons and places. The intent is to establish, confirm, or validate relationships and to develop generalizations that contribute to theory. As eThekweni Region, is one of the six regions in KwaZulu-Natal, findings of this study will make inferences to the other five regions. A very

distinctive feature of this methodology is that it uses a deductive form of logic wherein theories and hypotheses are tested in a cause and effect order Creswell, (1994: 7).

The aim of this study as described in chapter one is to determine:

- What forms of communication channels and systems are used by middle managers and senior managers in the Department of Education
- The effectiveness of these channels and systems of communication
- If communication channels and systems of communication contribute to the effective functioning of the district and circuits
- The impact of the leadership styles on effective communication
- The Department's transformation into using e-communication in communicating

Before the study was conducted, permission from the Regional Senior Manager was sought and obtained.

6.2 Choice of Locale and Selection of Target Group

The study was conducted at eThekweni Region. eThekweni Region was chosen out of 6 regions in KwaZulu-Natal. This was within reasonable travelling distance of the researcher's home and place of work. A study conducted in this area would be fully representative as eThekweni Region has urban, semi-urban, rural and semi-rural areas. Umlazi District and Pinetown District have all the four categorized areas and Ilembe District is without the urban area.

The targeted population was the district, circuit, ward and school based managers. With school based managers, it was only the principals, and then School Governing Body chairpersons. For the purpose of this study the researcher used a purposive sample, because respondents would provide responses that are direct, and relevant to the study. Du Ploy (1995: 61) has this to say "sometimes researchers find themselves in a position where it is difficult or even impossible to draw a random sample." The researcher experienced the same challenge in this study. A number of SEM, s and a few of CESM, s posts were vacant. As such the number of respondents was reduced because those who were acting in vacant posts were principals of schools. The researcher decided to leave them out.

Communication is a common problem in almost every section/component of the eThekweni Region. Argent (1996: 76) argues that "image is a reflection of organization reality. It

is the corporation seen through its constituent's eyes. Through proper management of communication constituents can be made to gain an image of the company."

If communication is poor, even performance becomes affected. According to Nyembe-Kganye (2005: 79), the *eThekwin*i Region is fairly new. It is for this reason that the researcher looks at ways and means of improving communication so that it can portray the best image of *eThekwin*i Region as a result of its communication strategies.

The regions communicate with schools via districts, circuits and wards.

Fig 2 shows the organizational structure of the KZN DoE by regions and districts

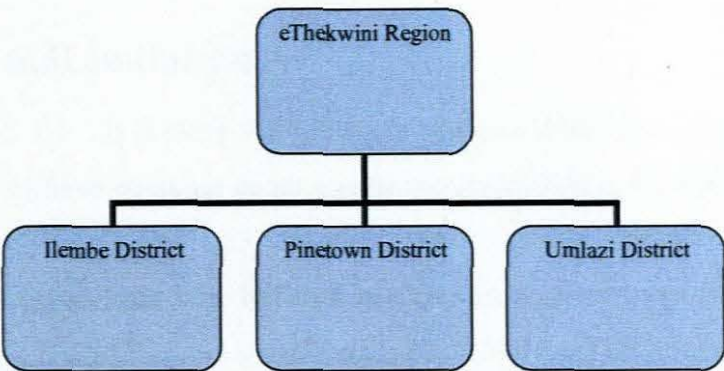
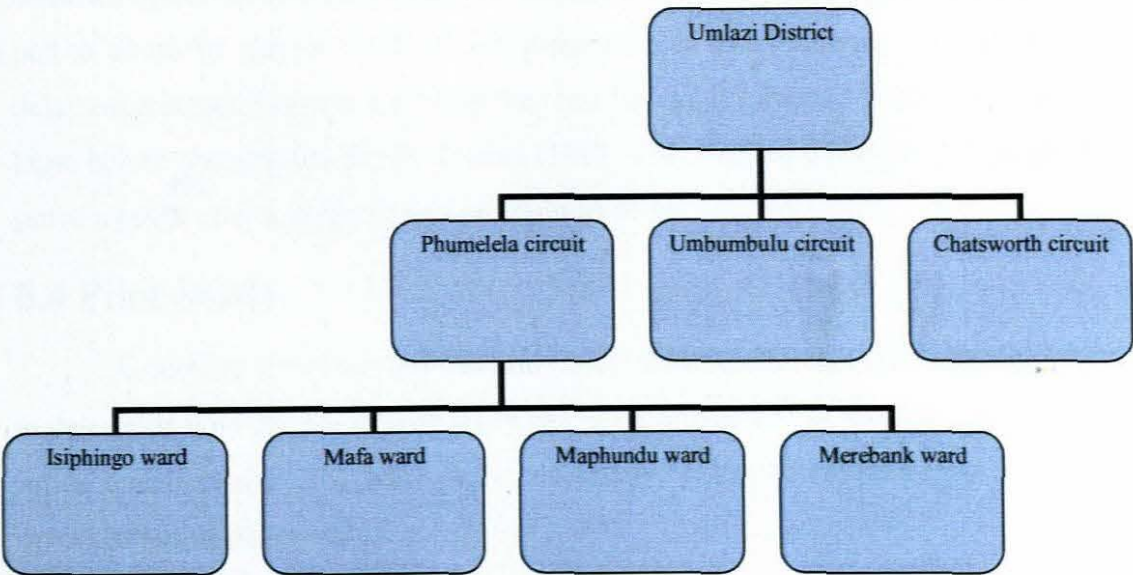


Fig 3 shows examples of districts, circuits and wards in the *eThekwin*i Region of the KZN DoE.



What has been observed is that, it is not only schools that are in the rural areas that suffer from poor communication, but also those in urban areas. The implication is that, though the distance may be a contributory factor but it is not the only factor. Schools that have faxes, telephones and e-mails sometimes do not get information on time or do not get it at all. Whilst some schools have e-mail facility, some districts and circuits do not have this facility. In some, where they have, it is only for the senior manager's usage only. Leadership styles are also a factor in this case.

A survey was conducted to determine the methods used in communication in the Department of Education with reference to superintendent of education management in the districts of eThekweni Region. Before the study could be conducted, permission to the regional chief manager was sought and obtained.

6.3 Limitation

It is clear that the study suffered limitations. Apart from sample size, it was not possible to have personal contact with the respondents. Another limitation was that, a number of SEMs and a few of CSEMs posts were vacant at the time of the survey. As such the number of respondents was reduced because those who were acting in vacant posts were principals of schools. The researcher decided to leave them out of the survey.

Questionnaires were sent out to potential respondents. Not all of the targeted respondents brought the questionnaires back. Some questionnaires were brought back in person; some were collected by the researcher from SEMs whilst others were faxed to the researcher. The researcher had to phone to remind SEMs about questionnaires to try to keep up with time. There was a delay experienced because the researcher had to wait for the two weeks that was agreed upon to lapse before phoning the SEMs. Babbie (1992: 334) stresses this point: "A single study does not prove a point, only a series of studies begin to do so".

6.4 Pilot Study

According to Babbie and Mouton (2002: 244), the fundamental purpose of a pilot study is to determine how the subsequent study can be improved and to identify the possible flaws/errors in the questionnaire. The pilot study essentially, gives the researcher, a representation of the investigation, in actual practice.

A pilot study was conducted to eliminate any flaws that could be experienced by actual respondents. Colleagues and few principals assisted in filling the initial questionnaires for the pilot study. The “real” responses the researcher received were of sufficient quality to help the researcher answer his research questions. Simple sampling method with regard to principals was used. The results from the respondents provided room for improvement in the study. It is crucial, especially where more than one language or cultural group is included Babbie and Mouton (2002: 244).

6.5 Validity

Babbie (1992: 132) maintains that content validity refers to the degree to which a measure covers the range of meanings included within the concept. What the researcher considers critical in the study is content validity. Making use of a pilot study was one way of checking the validity of the questionnaire. Questions were also formulated in accordance with the objectives.

6.6 Collection of Data

Having secured permission from the Regional Senior manager, the researcher proceeded with the administration of the questionnaires. Some questionnaires were personally handed to respondents i.e. SEMS and principals. For the school governing body ones the researcher relied on the principals. They distributed them and collected them and brought them back to the researcher.

A structured questionnaire was used. It had both open and closed ended questions. Closed questions predominated in the questionnaires as “open ended questions demand more psychological effort on the part of the respondents” according to (Sudman and Bradburn 1982: 151). According to Babbie, (1992: 127) close ended questions are very popular in survey research because they “provide greater uniformity of responses and are easily processed”.

To get information from (respondents) CSEMs SEMs, principals and SGBs questionnaires were used as a data collecting instrument. According to Behr (1984: 352) the questionnaire method continues to be, if properly constructed and administered, the best available instrument for obtaining information. The questionnaires were designed with certain desiderata in min

- a) Superintendent of education management Appendix 1
- b) Principals Appendix 2

- c) School governing body representative Appendix 3
- d) SGB Questionnaires were written both in English and Zulu, for the SGB members had to respond in the language they were more comfortable in.
 - The questionnaires had to be designed in a way that would suit the poor readers too.
 - The majority of questions had to be of a closed nature, requiring the respondent to place only (×) opposite one of the several possible answers to encourage filling in.

6.7 Data Analysis

The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) to quantify the results. The responses were captured into the computer program to observe frequencies of each response. Tables and graphs were easily constructed using this program and also Microsoft excel. The statistical analysis and data management system permitted the analysis and interpretation of data. Tables, figures and graphs were also used to enhance data analysis.

6.8 Distribution of Questionnaires

The SEMs were instrumental in distributing and collecting questionnaires. One hundred and ninety questionnaires were distributed and one hundred and thirty one were received back.

Target Group	No of Questionnaires	No of Questionnaires
	Distributed	Returned
SEMs	30	12
Principals	80	57
SGBs	80	62
Total	190	131

6.9 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher discussed the methods and the questionnaire design used in the study. The reason for the choice of locale and target group was given. The study was limited to eThekwin Region as it was accessible to the researcher. The size of the study experienced shortcomings as there were many acting SEMs at that time and the fact that not all questionnaires were brought back. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed. Questionnaires were crafted in such a way that they responded to the objectives presented in the study.

Distribution of questionnaires was done through the SEMs. A pilot study was conducted to test the flaws that could be inherent in the questions. The collection of data was done through the use of questionnaires. In analysing data the SPSS was used. The present chapter concludes the literature survey a component of the study. The following chapter outlines the research method that is being used for the empirical phase of the study.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is of vital importance to the study as it deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of statistical information collected from respondents. It gives meaning to all the data that was collected. It is this interpretation of data that leads to the researcher's realization of whether the hypotheses were met or rejected. Tables, figures and graphs have been used to bring more clarity to statistical data being analyzed and interpreted

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was used to thoroughly analyse, the responses to each and every questionnaire. The analysis of data will reveal the views of the SGBs and office based Departmental officials regarding communication within the eThekwin Region. Generalizations about organisational communication were based on the data that was collected.

The analysis of results includes the information on demographics of SEMs and principals. The SGB results analysis focused only on the gist of the study. What the researcher looked for in the demographics of the SEMs and the principals was the profiles of the respondents such as ethnic identity, gender, age and years of experience. There were few questions that were not responded to and those were open ended questions.

7.2 Data analysis

According to E (1997: 252), Descriptive Statistics is a branch of statistics that describes what data looks like. He further states that studies takes small statistics samples of a population and from those samples make inferences by estimating and predicting that the general characteristics of a population are inferential.

7.2.1 Sequence of presentation of results

The results of the study will be presented in the following sequence: Principals' descriptive statistics Superintendents of Education Management descriptive statistics School Governing Bodies descriptive statistics

7.2.2 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive Frequency Statistics

7.3 Descriptive Frequency Statistics for Principals

Figure 1: V1 for principals: respondent age group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	36 - 40 yrs	7	12.3	12.3	12.3
	41 - 50 yrs	34	59.6	59.6	71.9
	51 - 60 yrs	16	28.1	28.1	100.0
	Total	57	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Twenty-Eight point one percent are between 51-60 years. The majority of respondents at 59.6% and at 28.1% reflect that these are seasoned principals who have been in the Department for a number of years, who are suppose to know the culture of the Department well and its communication strategies. In the same breath they inherited leadership and management styles of the old regime which is top-down. Davis (1997) points out that people whose managers apply this type of leadership style “Feel depressed, hopeless and neglected.” They do not enjoy development because the manager is afraid of losing power and control.

Figure 2: v2 for principals: respondent gender group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	24	42.1	42.1	42.1
	Male	33	57.9	57.9	100.0
	Total	57	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

The above table results reveal gender dispersion of participated principals in this project, the participated respondents in this project 42.1 % are female principals and 57.9 % are male principals. The bigger number of males may be a reflection of the period where senior positions were male dominated and with gender equity in place, the females are slowly beginning to occupy managerial positions. The gender equity act is being implemented by the DoE.

Figure 3: v3 for principals: Respondent race group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	African	40	70.2	70.2	70.2
	Coloured	4	7.0	7.0	77.2
	Indian	8	14.0	14.0	91.2
	Jewish	4	7.0	7.0	98.2
	White	1	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	57	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

The above table revealed that 72.2% of the respondents in this question were Africans. One point eight percent represented white principals who are in the minority in the DoE. Their schools however, have sophisticated communication facilities e.g., e-mail and internet. They nonetheless, cannot make use of these facilities, when they liase with most circuit offices because most circuit offices do not have these facilities. Provision of these critical communication tools to SEMs have not been seen to be a priority by certain CSEMs who should motivate for their acquisition. Even if the SEMs had the e-mail and the internet facilities that would not bring a one hundred percent improvement because of the schools that are in rural areas.

Figure 4: v4 for principals: how long have you been a principal?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 - 5 yrs	28	49.1	49.1	49.1
	6 - 10 yrs	19	33.3	33.3	82.5
	11 - 15 yrs	5	8.8	8.8	91.2
	16 –yrs	5	8.8	8.8	100.0
	Total	57	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Forty Nine point one percent represents educators who have been principals for 5 years and less. Seventeen points six percent represents respondents who have been principals for between 16 years and above. These principals besides the unavailability of funds at their schools to purchase computers, computer usage may still be a taboo to them and thus could not use e-mails or internet to speed up communication. According to Meyer in (Mercury December 2007)

some people resent change, which might be the case with these principals as well. As is common in all turn around strategies, people embrace the change and some do not. Seventeen point six percent may be experiencing the “plateau” phase, which ,in turn, is followed by a decline, characterized by fear and uncertainty among managers in mid-career and have been in the same job for 10-15 years. The growing complexity and demands on performance, makes them feel that in the not too- distant future, they will no longer be able to respond to these demands effectively SAMDI (2003).

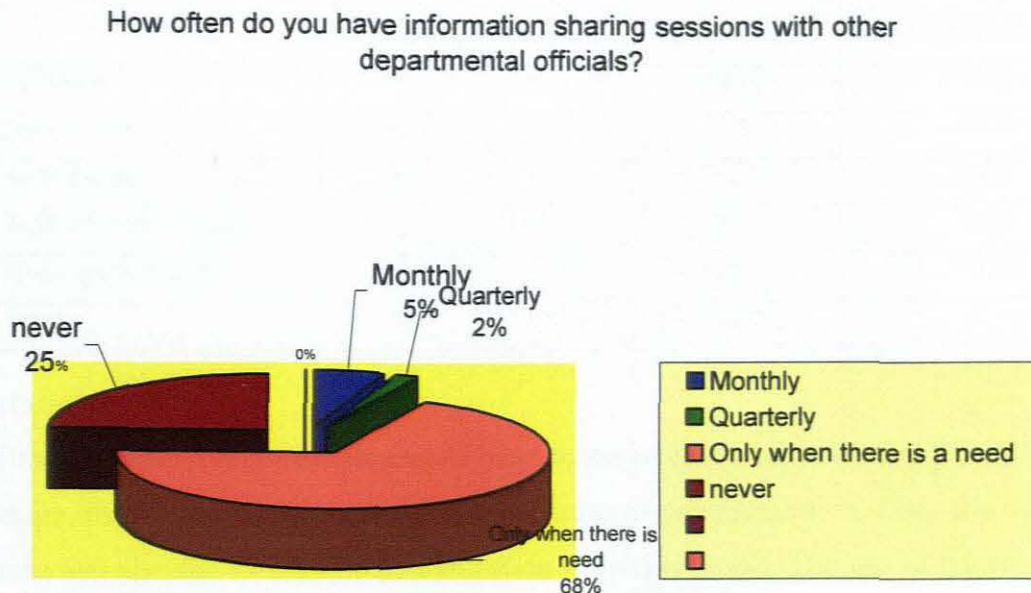
Figure 5: v5 for principals: how often do principals have information sharing with SEMs?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fortnightly	8	14.0	14.3	14.3
	Monthly	25	43.9	44.6	58.9
	Quarterly	1	1.8	1.8	60.7
	Only when there is a need	21	36.8	37.5	98.2
	Never	1	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	56	98.2	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.8		
Total		57	100.0		

Interpretation

The table revealed that 57.9% of the principals communicated frequently with their SEMs whilst 36.8% were not exposed to a structured system of monthly or quarterly meetings. They only interacted with their SEMs in a very loosely arranged manner that is when a need arose. This could result in information gaps or information censoring, where the SEM sifts and selects information to pass on. Planning, leadership, organizing, control necessitate a lot of discussions, between the SEMs and the principals for the best service delivery in the betterment of schools. Sherman *et al.* (1996: 536) maintains that no aspect of human resource management is as persuasive as communication. It is therefore critical that SEMs do communicate orally with their supervisees. A good leader is always keen to hear what is going on and moves away from the notion that a leader knows all.

Figure 6: v6 for principals: how often do you have information sharing sessions with other departmental officials?



Interpretation

The above table results reveal perceptions of participated principals in this study; they have expressed the following interaction patterns with other departmental officials, 5.3 % monthly interaction, 1.8 % quarterly, 68.4 % only when there is a need, and 24.6 % stated that they never have information sharing sessions with other departmental officials. This table reveals that there is minimal interaction and interventions made by other sub-directorates in schools. Sixty eight point four percent of departmental officials communicate with principals only if there is a need.

The role of the other sub-directorates is to support schools and therefore they need to be visible in schools to advice, support and address challenges that the schools may have, timeously, so as to promote a healthy culture of teaching and learning. As some of the eThekweni Region schools are far out in the rural areas, it is critical that district officials do frequently liase with these schools. They are sometimes left out with regard to changes that take place within the Department, because of critical circulars not reaching them. Rijnen in (Mercury December 2007) views "Corporate Governance, HR policies, business strategies and interventions as pieces of the

puzzle that make a successful business. The key is that everybody needs to understand where these pieces fit and must be able to see the whole picture”. This will happen if the support staff particularly subject advisors liase with schools frequently.

Figure 7: v7 for principals: normally, how do departmental officials communicate with you?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Circulars	8	14.0	14.0	14.0
	Documents	2	3.5	3.5	17.5
	All of the above	42	73.7	73.7	91.2
	Workshops& circulars	3	5.3	5.3	96.5
	Meetings & circulars	2	3.5	3.5	100.0
	Total	57	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Though a space for the mentioning of other forms of communication was provided on the questionnaire, there was no mention of the latest forms of communication. Only the traditional face to face and circular means of communication were mentioned. The use of telephones and cell phones is rife in the Department yet it was not mentioned. It is seen to be the quickest in the ever rushing information enquiries, by senior Departmental officials, for them to respond to urgent queries from the office of the MEC and others. SEMs therefore in their search for this information, communicate with principals through telephones and cell phones.

Cell phones are also handy in reaching out to rural areas principals, where there are no telephones. Managers can exchange information with members of their Departments through the use of Electronic meetings. Responses are presented by participants onto their computer screens; these in turn are anonymously displayed on a projection screen in the room (Lowery, 1985).

Figure 8: v8 for principals: how do you receive legislation, circulars, policies that relate to your work and that of educators?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Colleagues	1	1.8	1.8	1.8
	Unions	3	5.3	5.3	7.0
	Senior Department officials	33	57.9	57.9	64.9
	Unions & Senior Departmental officials	12	21.0	21.0	70.2
	All of the above	5	8.8	8.8	78.9
	Other	3	5.3	5.3	100
	Total	57	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Fifty seven point nine percent of the respondents received their information through departmental officials. This showed that departmental officials are their main source of accessing information, as against their colleagues and their unions. Fifteen point three percent reflects a combination of those who got information from their colleagues, unions, and other sources, with the exception of the Departmental officials. However the Department still needs to improve the 21.2% that does not get information from it. For these schools to implement Departmental policies, they rely on the Departmental officials, if schools are not provided with the necessary information, this points to ineffective communication by the SEM and office based Departmental officials.

Figure 9: v9 for principals: do you have a mechanism in place, to communicate your views suggestions to senior departmental officials?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	36	63.2	63.2	63.2
	No	21	36.8	36.8	100.0
	Total	57	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

This table revealed that there is an acceptable two way communication between principals and senior departmental officials, 63.2% of the respondents responded positively, to this question declaring that there is a mechanism in place to communicate their views. The way in which managers communicate, both as senders and receivers, is crucial for obtaining effective performance. Theoretically, managers who desire to communicate effectively can use both exposure and feedback to enlarge the area of common understanding.

Figure 10: v10 for principals: if yes, what are they?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Suggestion box	5	8.7	8.7	8.7
	Meetings with SEMs	7	12.2	12.2	20.9
	No Response	21	36.8	36.8	57.7
	More Circuits needed	1	1.7	1.7	59.4
	Not Applicable	20	35.0	35.0	94.4
	Correspondence	3	5.2	5.2	99.6
	Total		100.0	100.0	100.0

Interpretation

It was surprising to note that, whilst in the previous question, a high percentage of 63.2% claimed to have a mechanism of communicating their views with senior departmental officials, when given a chance to state these mechanism 36.8% decided not to respond and 35.0% fell on the “ not Applicable” category. This method of research is said not to be enough to yield the truth. It begins to do so when merged with other methods. May be since questionnaires were delivered and submit via the SEM, in their responses they stated what was to appeal to the SEM. There is indication of a problem but people do not want to expose themselves. This is an area that warrants further research.

Figure 11: v11 for principals: if no, how then do you make inputs to the senior departmental officials?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Suggestion box	2	3.5	3.5	3.5
	Meetings with SEMs	21	36.8	36.8	40.3
	No Response	9	15.7	15.7	56.0
	Unannounced visits by SEM	2	3.5	3.5	59.5
	Information sharing for a	11	19.2	19.2	78.7
	Not Applicable	3	5.2	5.2	83.9
	Correspondence	4	7.0	7.0	90.9
	Telephone	5	8.7	8.7	100
	Total		100.0	100.0	100.0

Interpretation

Thirty six point eight percent respondents would love to see meetings with SEMs taking place. Nineteen point two percent would like to have information sharing fora put in place where they can air their views with SEMs. Eight point seven percent preferred the use of telephone, whilst 7.0% looked at correspondence as the means to be used for communicating with SEMs. Two groups of respondents at 3.5% each suggested suggestion box and unannounced SEM visits as the method to be used in communicating. Not a single latest form of communication was mentioned.

Figure 12: v12 for principals: what would you suggest as being means of reaching out to senior departmental officials?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Individual meetings	2	3.5	3.5	3.5
	Circulars	5	8.7	8.7	12.2
	Meetings	3	5.2	5.2	17.4
	No Response	2	3.5	3.5	20.9
	All of the above	45	78.9	78.9	100.0
Total		57	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Seventy eight point nine percent of the principals' respondents recommended both meetings and circulars as the preferred means of reaching out to senior departmental officials, including SEMs. Thirteen point nine percent suggested one of the two. Only two decided not to respond. It comes out clearly that their scope of thinking unlike that of the SGBs, who mentioned e-mails, is limited to the commonly used channels of communication not the latest ones. Considering the age bracket of the majority of respondents, it reflects people who fear to move from their comfort zone and try out new things.

Figure 13: v13 for principals: how do you communicate with your staff?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Personal basis	3	5.3	5.5	5.5
	Circulars	4	7.0	7.3	12.7
	Meetings	3	5.3	5.5	18.2
	All of the above	45	78.9	81.8	100.0
	Total	55	96.5	100.0	
Missing	System	2	3.5		
Total		57	100.0		

Interpretation

The same forms of communication that are used by senior departmental officials in communicating with principals as reflected in v7 are used by principals in communicating with their staff which is on personal basis, circulars, and meetings. Faxes, internet, teleconferencing, and e-mails are not mentioned. However, district and circuit officials do use faxes in communicating with school principals.

Figure 14: v14 for principals: what mechanism do you have in place to get inputs and feedback from your staff?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Staff and SMT meetings	31	56.3	56.3	56.3
	Staff Development workshops	8	14.5	14.5	70.8
	Open –door policy	3	5.4	5.4	76.2
	Suggestion box	4	7.2	7.2	83.4
	Memos to specific individuals	5	9.0	9.0	92.4
	No Response	4	7.2	7.2	100
	Total	55	99.6	100.0	
	Missing System	2	3.5		
Total		57	100.0		

Interpretation

Fifty six point three percent of the respondents use staff and school management teams meetings. Fourteen point five percent make use of staff development workshops. Forty five point four percent engages in open-door policy, which is in line with participatory management style. Nine percent write memos to individuals and 7.2% use suggestion box, as a communication strategy with subordinates. It should be noted that feedback monitors and put deviations right in an organization and should be effectively built into the continuum of the decision making process.

Figure 15: v15 for principals, do you always get departmental information via your circuit office?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	36	63.2	65.5	65.5
	No	19	33.3	34.5	100.0
	Total	55	96.5	100.0	
Missing	System	2	3.5		
Total		57	100.0		

Interpretation

The above table results reveal perceptions of participated respondents in this project, they have expressed 63.2 % yes, 33.3 % no and 3.5 % did not answer towards the statement do you always get departmental information via your circuit office. The biggest percentage is that of those who agree with the statement. It is noticeable that still a big number does not enjoy the same privilege as this group of getting documents via the officials. This may be a result of lack

of control systems on the part of the managers, portraying a laissez-faire kind of an approach.

Figure 16: v16 for principals: Are you satisfied with the way the information is cascaded to you?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	22	38.6	39.3	39.3
	No	34	59.6	60.7	100.0
	Total	56	98.2	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.8		
Total		57	100.0		

Interpretation

The majority of the participants showed dissatisfaction with the way information is cascaded to them, although in v8 the majority i.e. 57.9% stated that they get information via the circuit office. The indication here is that, much as they get information through the circuit office, they still experience problems with the method in which information filters down to them.

Figure 17: v17 for principals: given a chance what would you do to improve the way of communication?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SEMs and Subject Advisors to frequent schools.	8	14.3	14.3	14.3
	Circular delivery will be improved	10	17.5	17.5	31.8
	Department to records and track distributed circulars	11	19.2	19.2	51
	Use of nodal points information desk and hotline	5	8.7	8.7	59.7
	Pigeon holes	3	5.2	5.2	64.9
	Notify schools timeously of time changes	3	5.2	5.2	70.1
	Have a year plan	4	7.0	7.0	77.1
	Department to have messengers to deliver information	2	3.5	3.5	80.6
	No responses	11	19.2	19.2	100
Total		57	100.0		

Interpretation

Nineteen point two percent of the respondents advised that the Department should keep records and also track distributed circulars. Seventeen point five wanted to see circular delivery improve. Fourteen point three percent proposed frequent visit by SEMs and Subject advisors to

schools. Eight point seven percent suggested the use of nodal points, pigeon holes, information desk and hotline as a ways of improving communication between principals and SEMs. What is noticeable is that principals have problems with the way SEMs as well as other departmental officials communicate with them. SEMs themselves stated the same about their supervisors; they wished that forms of communication should improve.

7.4 Descriptive Frequency Statistics –SEMs

Figure 18: V1 for SEMs: respondent gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	3	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Male	9	75.0	75.0	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

The number of female SEMs reflects a gender imbalance as in the principal's results. Males are still dominating senior positions in the different levels of the Department. Seventy five percent of the respondents who were permanently employed SEMs were males as against Twenty five percent of their female counterparts. This situation has not improved.

Figure 19: V2 for SEMs: respondent race group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	African	6	50.0	50.0	66.7
	Coloured	2	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Jewish	2	16.7	16.7	83.3
	White	2	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Fifty percent of the total number of the respondents was Africans. Lately there has been a decline in the appointments of other racial groups in senior positions. In the past appointments to senior positions were characterized by promotions. Post 1994 a number of Acts and policies came into effect, ushering in Employment Equity Act and new recruitment procedures that brought achievable post requirements.

With these policies and acts in place many people now have begun to apply bringing in vast competition. That as it may be it is an undisputable fact that Africans are in the majority in the Department and may influence the occupiers of the management post.

Figure 20: V3 for SEMs: for how long have you been a SEM?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1- 5 yrs	8	66.7	66.7	66.7
	6 - 10 yrs	2	16.7	16.7	83.3
	11 - 15 yrs	2	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

The highest percentage of 66.7% is SEMs who have been in this position for a period of five years and below. Since the time when upward mobility opportunities opened up, SEMs positions have become stepping stones to greater heights. Their positions allow them wider exposure as they have to understand almost everything that takes place in schools; hence they fair well also in other sub-directorates management positions.

Management tools such as skills, knowledge and insights are necessary in senior management posts .A number of SEMs has become either deputy directors or directors within and outside their line function. In their quest for senior posts they have left vacancies that have since been filled by newly appointed SEMs. Some have exited the system because of age.

Figure 21: V4 for SEMs: how often do you have information sharing meetings with your Circuit Manager?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Once a week	4	33.3	36.4	36.4
	Twice a week	1	8.3	9.1	45.5
	Fortnightly	2	16.7	18.2	63.6
	Other	4	33.3	36.4	100.0
	Total	11	91.7	100.0	
Missing	System	1	8.3		
Total		12	100.0		

Interpretation

Fifty eight percent revealed that SEMs communicated frequently with their Chief SEMs Chief SEMs sit in extended Regional meetings .They come back and share the information with SEMs. In most cases these are instructions that SEMs have to carry out. The thirty three point three percent who responded with the option (other) may not be getting information frequently, and that may hinder service delivery a lot at the level of the schools. In the other category 16.7% mentioned that they had sporadic meetings with their CSEMs. Davey, in Mercury (2008) states

that, one of the leading managers communicates constantly with the employees, so that they know that they are an important part of the company. CSEMs should do the same with SEMs. A clear vision has positive consequences. When top management effectively communicates the vision, there is a significantly higher job satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, pride, *esprit de corps*, and clarity about the organization’s values, productivity and encouragement (Smit *et al.* 1997: 114).

Figure 22: V5 for SEMs: how do you receive acts, policies, circulars that are relevant to your work?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Colleagues	2	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Senior Departmental officials	9	75.0	75.0	91.7
	Other	1	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Just like with the principals’ responses, the Department represented by senior Departmental officials is still the source of information for most SEMs. Seventy five percent of the SEMs receive all documents relevant to their work via senior Departmental officials. However, 25% still does not get to be serviced by the employer with regard to Acts, policies and circulars which spell out the way in which the Department should function. Serious means to provide SEMs with such documents are essential. With such a remarkable percentage, proper service delivery is compromised.

The impact of Ineffective communication discredits some SEMs against others. Some, SEMs may not deliver satisfactorily, because of lack of information. Traditional management methods which relied on a competitive and aggressive leadership style where leaders were the major custodians of information have lost place in the present times. Eight point three percent made use of the registry to access documents.

Nobin (2004) regards leadership as the relationship and interaction between the ‘superior’ and ‘subordinate’. It is, ultimately, the influence of the leader on his or her subordinates and conversely, the influence of a subordinate to a leader. If CSEMs do not engage in more information sharing with SEMs, Such relationships will not develop and SEMs will find themselves in the cold and less empowered. The CSEMs should ensure that SEMs have enough information in order to reach sufficient coordination of tasks.

Figure 23: V6 for SEMs: do you as SEMs have measures in place to communicate your views or suggestions to the top senior departmental officials?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	7	58.3	58.3	58.3
	No	5	41.7	41.7	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Fifty eight point three percent said yes they do have measures in place to communicate their views to senior management whilst a substantial percentage of 41.7% said they don't have measures in place. The contradiction or discrepancy that is observed here could be attributed to the fact that SEMs responding to this questionnaire are from different districts, manned by different managers with different leadership and management styles. Some are open to change and thus practice transformational leadership approach with top-down and bottom-up form of communication. Others are maintaining the autocratic approach with only top down form of communication.

Figure 24: V7 for SEMs: if yes, what are they?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Help Desk	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Workshops	4	33.3	33.3	41.6
	Suggestion Box	2	16.6	16.6	58.2
	Ward managers & task team	2	16.6	16.6	74.8
	Memos	3	25	25	100
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Thirty three point three percent mentioned the use of workshops. Twenty five percent make use of Memos. Sixteen point six percent use suggestion box and another 16.6% use ward managers and task team. Workshops are not happening, qualitatively and quantitatively, and cannot be the best method of communicating views to senior management because in most cases workshops are run by independent service providers or junior people in the departmental structure. CSEMs as people who supervise SEMs have to establish effective relationships with SEMs and relate to them in new dynamic ways that empower them.

Figure 25: v: 8 for SEMs: If no, how then do you advise the top departmental official for them to be proactive?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Writing Letters	2	16.6	16.6	16.6
	Via CSEMs	3	25	25	41.6
	No Responses	7	58.3	58.8	100
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Twenty five percent communicate via the CSEM. Sixteen point six percent writes letters. Fifty eight point three percent did not give any response. The protocol is observed. Of note is that the two way communication is minimal as 58.8% did not respond. The results reflect that the bureaucratic and autocratic management styles are perpetuated in the new systems. Whilst the vision to transform education has been set in motion in new policies, leadership orientations of some of superintendents of eThekwini Region are still shaped by ethos of the past.

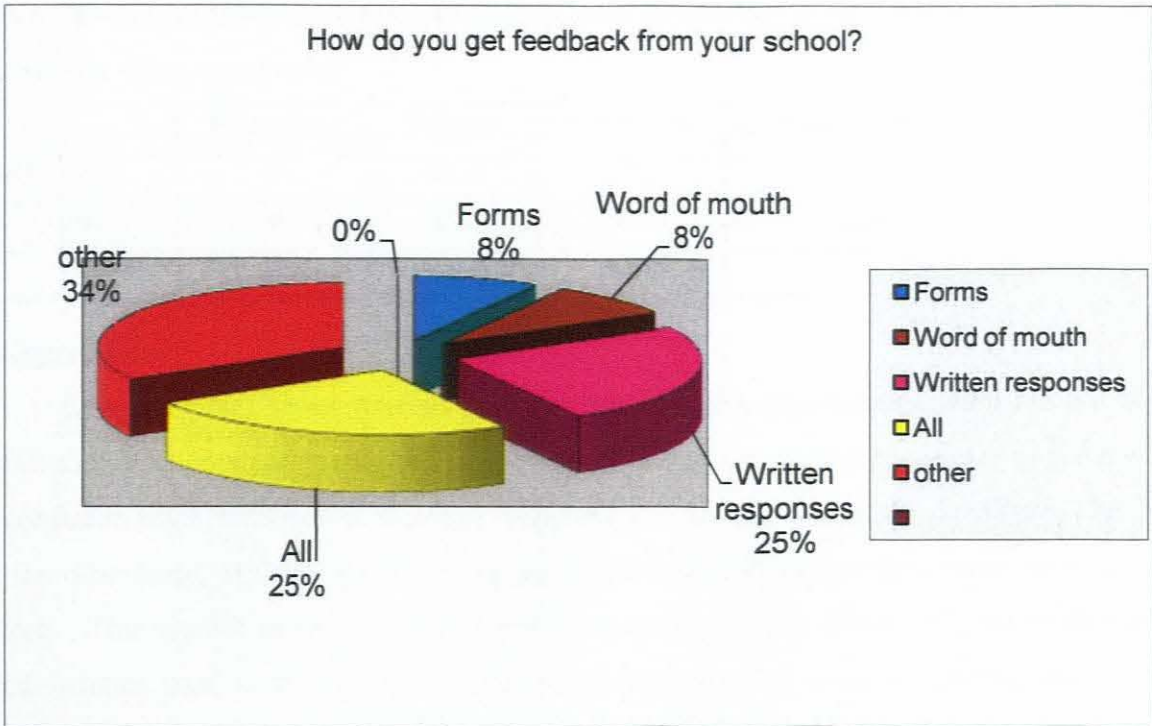
Figure 26: V9 for SEMs: how do you communicate with your schools?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Telephones & meetings	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Telephones, circulars & meetings	4	33.3	33.3	41.7
	Telephones , meetings & memos	1	8.3	8.3	50.0
	All	6	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

The majority of SEMs at 33.3% communicate with their principals through telephones, circulars and meetings. It is surprising to note the mention of telephones by SEMs which were not mentioned by the principals in their questionnaire as a way used by SEMs to communicate with them. It is not clear whether the 8.3% represent those who use memo in communicating with schools, because in the other categories telephones, circulars and meetings have been mentioned and responded to with the exception of the memo.

Figure 27: v10 for SEMs: how do you get feedback from your schools?



Interpretation

The combination of the forms, the word of mouth and written responses at 58.3% is the most used form for giving feedback to SEMs by principal. As stand alone in the group, the written responses lead other forms of communicating feedback to SEMs by 25%. Success in the area of feedback and control requires organisational information, including verbal accounts and quantitative information. On the “other” category participants stated the use of telephone as the most used method of getting the feedback.

If both managers and subordinates are not progressing satisfactorily towards objectives, feedback can be useful to them to correct their actions. Confirming how we relate to others requires feedback from those that we deal with. The way people react when given feedback will determine whether such feedback will be offered again. Feedback becomes the control system of our self-management Swani (1959: 99).

Figure 28: v11 for SEMs: does the information from the district, region, and head office always go via your office to schools?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	4	33.3	33.3	33.3
	No	8	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Sixty six point seven percent revealed that channels of communication are not always followed. Sometimes communiqué is sent direct to schools from higher offices. This act results in confusion when feedback is required. Some schools having missed the deadlines. The SEMs on the other hand, will not be following up on the information that they have never heard of before. This results in the delay of service rendering. Nobin (2004: 11) states that public administration was, in the pre-democratic era, characterised by an approach that led to a rule-driven, secretive and hierarchal management structure, infused with authoritarian and non-consultative management styles and cultures. This approach still manifests itself in the present times.

Figure 29: V12 for SEMs: which is the most commonly used method of communicating with your schools and why?

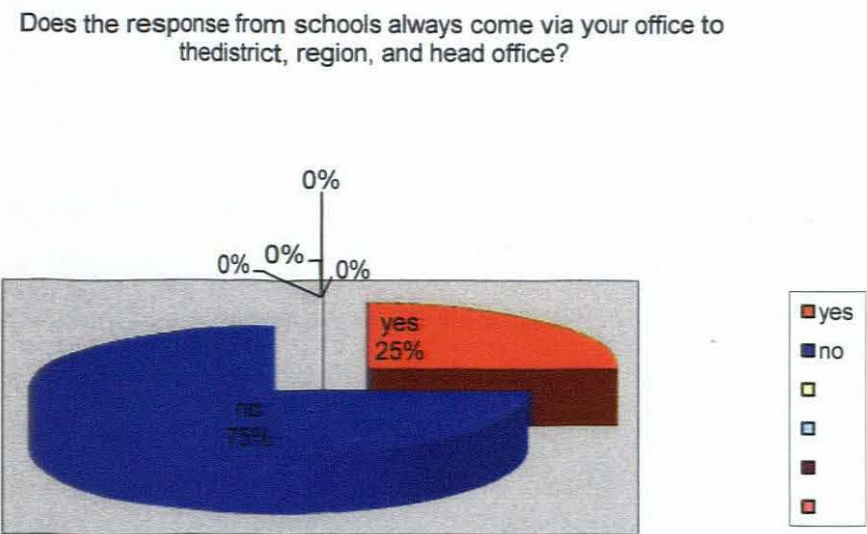
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Telephone	3	25	25	25
	Circulars	4	33.3	33.3	58.3
	Ward Meetings	2	16.6	16.6	74.9
	post	1	8.3	8.3	83.2
	Introduce E-Mail	1	8.3	8.3	91.5
	No Response	1	8.3	8.3	100
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Thirty three percent said it is circulars, 25% pointed at telephones,16.6% mentioned ward meetings as the most used method by SEMs to communicate with schools. Telephones are commonly used in emergencies and in follow up request/reminders of required information.

Minimal use of post results from stoppage of the usage of franking machines by the Department. Only 8.3% indicated the use of e-mail.

Figure 30: v13 for SEMs: does the response from schools always come via your office to the district, region, and head office?



Interpretation

The results portray a communication challenge within the Department. Seventy five percent of information by passes SEMs who are managing these schools. What goes to districts, regions, and head office remain unknown to the immediate supervisors the SEMs. They lead people who have additional information than themselves. The communication channels set by the Department are not observed. According to Snyder (1983), a supervisor who provides more accurate and timely types of communication enhances the work environment and thereby is likely to increase employee’s commitment to the organization. When SEMs are not provided with accurate information, they cannot provide it to principals.

Figure 31: v14 for SEMs: if the information has been sent direct to schools, how do you come to know about it?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Through principals who erroneously submit it to my office	6	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Through principals enquiring about it from me	6	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

All SEMs who participated in this study mentioned principals as the people who made them aware of the information that did not go via their offices. Provision for higher departmental offices, were made available in the questionnaire to be chosen as offices that informed the SEMs of the information which was sent direct to schools but not one respondent chose them. Officials in these offices did not inform SEMs about the information that was sent direct to schools, even just to make them aware of such.

Existing Communication channels and strategies reflect a challenge in the Department, and the Department cannot perform optimally under such conditions. Adherence to the present channels and strategies of communication require both enforcement and a re-look.

Figure 32: V15 for SEMs: are you satisfied with the way the information is cascaded to you?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	No	11	91.7	91.7	100.0
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

A big percentage of 91.7% SEMs showed dissatisfaction with the way information is cascaded to them. Only 8.3% was satisfied with the manner in which information was filtered down to them. The indication of these results is that the present communication channels and strategies may be good, but the various layers of management affect the smooth flow of communication in the Department. The dynamics inherent in the strategy in respect of the structure process is noticeable. The Bill of Rights and the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996, 195) (1)) of the Republic of South Africa and other pieces of legislation however challenge managers

to change from apartheid-laden values to the democratic values embedded in the constitution. Senior management should not lose sight of the lower levels manager’s role, that of being a vital link and sometimes an acting spokesperson for the Department, and thus keep him well informed.

Figure 33: V16 for SEM: Given an opportunity to improve the situation, what would you do?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Hotline	1	8.3	8.3	8.3
	Promote 2 way communication	4	33.3	33.3	41.6
	Regular Meetings	2	16.6	16.6	58.2
	Post	1	8.3	8.3	66.5
	No Response	4	33.3	33.3	100
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Thirty three point three percent would promote two-way communication. Sixteen point six percent would hold regular meetings. Departmental meetings have a potential of perpetuating pseudo-participation designed to create a feeling of employee participation, without affecting the formal superintendent-subordinate authority system (Nobin 2004: 240). Eight point three percent would revive post system and 8.3% would use hotline. It could be possible that respondents do not mention the e-communication because they know that there is lack of infrastructure or it is total ignorance of such a means. The post could be seen as the cheapest communication system. Managers need to be cost effective and not engage in wasteful and fruitless expenditure as according to the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA). The 33.3% of those who chose not to respond is an indication of a serious problem. The respondents are either ambivalent or do not want to commit themselves in revealing the truth.

7.5 Descriptive Frequency Statistics for SGBs

Figure 34: S1: how often do you have SGB meetings?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Every two weeks	5	8.1	8.1	8.1
	Once a month	32	51.6	51.6	59.7
	Once a term	24	38.7	38.7	98.4
	Never	1	1.6	1.6	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

A greater percentage of 51.6% meet once a month which is in line with the stipulations of the South African Schools Act (SASA) whilst 38.7% meet once a term. SGBs meet fairly well as according to their responses on the questionnaires. Results reflect a lot of information sharing; on the part of SGBs however poorly organized meetings could be a waste of time.

Figure 35: S2: how do you access information relevant to the functioning of SGBs?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Principal	25	40.3	40.3	40.3
	Members of SGB from other schools	7	11.3	11.3	51.6
	Departmental officials workshops only	13	21.0	21.0	72.6
	Other members of the SGB in our school	3	4.8	4.8	77.4
	Once a weekly & monthly	14	22.6	22.6	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

The results revealed that the majority of SGBs with 40.3% received their information from the principals. Twenty one percent received information from departmental officials at the workshops only. The Department still leads in providing SGBs with information.

Figure 36: S3: which way do you use mostly to raise your concerns to the senior departmental officials?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Principals	39	62.9	63.9	63.9
	Circuit forum	2	3.2	3.3	67.2
	District forum	1	1.6	1.6	68.9
	All of the above	17	27.4	27.9	96.7
	None of the above	2	3.2	3.3	100.0
	Total	61	98.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.6		
Total		62	100.0		

Interpretation

Both circuit and district forums are the least used channels of communication by the SGBs, yet these were specially designed to be the mouthpiece of the SGBs. The existence of these bodies needs proper marketing. The SEMs as departmental representatives must take cognisance of the environment where they operate. Environments may adversely affect the

organisations’ operations. Education institutions at all levels are subject to public scrutiny and thus have to align themselves with the dictates of the Bill of Rights and the Batho-Pele principles, of Access to information and freedom of expression. The relevant stakeholders are still not fully included.

Figure 37: S4: how often, does the chairperson of the circuit forum, invite you to circuit forum meetings?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Once a month	5	8.1	8.1	8.1
	Once a term	13	21.0	21.0	29.0
	Never calls us	44	71.0	71.0	100.0
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Seventy one percent of respondents stated that they were never called to meetings by the circuit forum chairperson. The chairperson reflects two things; lack of understanding of role functions and not knowing the procedure of calling meetings. They rely on meetings called by ward managers/SEMs or else by Education Management Governance and Development (EMGD) unit. That is where they share their concerns. There is a grey area with regard to their functioning. Most unfortunately in the last structure of restructuring something went amiss and the Governance and Management sub-directorate was not catered for in the organogram at the level of the districts. Submissions to that effect have been made to the province to look into that matter. The Province working together with districts will have to design a procedure manual to address the plight of Circuits and Districts forums.

Figure 37: S5: state one function of the School Governance Unit.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Workshop the SGB,s	21	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Ensures SGB functionality	14	22.5	22.5	55.8
	Assist School Management Teams	2	3.2	3.2	59
	Coordinate & update SGB,s	5	8.0	8.0	67
	Sign cheques & forms	1	1.6	1.6	68.6
	Form liason between the Department & parents	2	3.2	3.2	71.8
	Don't know Any	6	9.6	9.6	81.4
	To ensure properly functioning of the school	4	6.4	6.4	87.8
	No Response	5	12.9	12.9	100
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Thirty three point three percent of the SGBs respondents saw the role of the Governance unit as that of work shopping SGBs. Twenty two point five percent saw it as that of ensuring SGBs functionality in schools whilst 9.6% did not know any work of this unit and 12.9% gave no response, to this question. It is clear that these external clients are not properly serviced when it comes to information sharing. In most cases departmental officials rely on principals to cascade information to SGBs, even when inviting them to workshops. Here one notices omissions, whether deliberate or not.

Figure 38: S6: what would you like to see happening so as to be kept informed of relevant issues?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	More Workshop	23	37.0	37.0	37.0
	Get circulars& correspondence regularly	8	12.9	12.9	49.9
	Newsletters	4	6.4	6.4	56.3
	Prompt Information dissemination	12	19.3	19.3	75.6
	Regular Forum Meetings	4	6.4	6.4	82
	E-Mail Usage	2	3.2	3.2	85.2
	Dept officials to work with us	4	6.4	6.4	91.6
	Evaluation of SGB Functionality	1	1.6	1.6	93.2
	Decentralisation of training	1	1.6	1.6	94.8
	No Responses	3	4.8	4.8	100
	Total	62	100.0	100.0	

Interpretation

Thirty seven percent proposed more workshops for SGBs, 19.3% suggested prompt delivery of information dissemination. Twelve point nine percent said they should get circular and documents regularly. Though the percentage was low, it was noted that SGBs did suggest the use of e-mails, it showed that the DoE still lacks behind with the use of e-communication. The fact that they mentioned e-mails indicates that, some SGBs are already using this communication channel either at their place of work or at their homes. Six point four percent recommended that the departmental officials should work with them. What the SGBs are requesting is their involvement in school governance related issues particularly at the level of the school. Of note, is that information does not reach SGBs on time and there is a plea made by them that the departmental official should change the status qou.

7.6 Conclusion

Following the discussion of this chapter, the researcher has presented the analysis of the responses of the principals, the SEMs and the SGBs. Data has been analyzed using frequency tables and graphs. The tables and graphs are a representation of the findings of the respondents. Open ended responses were presented thematically with summaries of the interpretation of data. The findings were represented in their raw scores. The analysis of data was done through the use of SPSS. Tables and graphs showed the different forms of communication and communication channels, which are frequently used within the Department of Education.

The form of communication that was mostly used was the traditional form of communication as against some of the modern technology forms of communication, mostly used by senior management and cooperate service of the KwaZulu-Natal DoE.

The next chapter presents overview of objectives, summary of findings, summary overview and recommendations of the study to improve communication.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

In this, final chapter of my dissertation, I will present my conclusions and recommendations regarding communication. This is a valuable chapter which provides important information about the outcomes of the study. The conclusions are drawn from the literature review and findings of the research investigation. In this chapter, outcomes are turned into conclusions and recommendations.

The survey looked at the effectiveness of the forms, systems and channels of communication used, by the middle managers and senior managers in the schools, circuit and the district of eThekweni Region. Nyembe-Kganye (2005) on the other hand dealt with the Chief Superintendent of Education Management as a link between the district and the circuits.

8.2 Overview of Objectives as Related to Findings

8.2.1 Research aim and Questions

The fundamental aim of the study was to provide guidelines and effective communication strategy for effective communication in the Department of Education. Case studies and questionnaires literature review, data collection, data analysis were used to realize this goal.

The researcher under this topic relates the findings to objectives to check first, whether these objectives were met or not. She further makes recommendations based on these findings.

The following are the objectives of the study as stated in chapter 1 to determine:

- The forms, of communication channels and systems that are used by middle managers and senior managers in the Department of Education
- The effectiveness of these channels and systems of communication that are used in the Department of Education
- If communication channels and systems of communication contribute to the effective functioning of district and circuits
- The impact of the leadership styles on communication

- The departments' transformation into using e-communication in communicating

Chapter 2 exposed information gaps/omissions experienced by managers particularly the SEMs in the workplace. Chapter 3 dealt with the different types of communication that are possible in an organization. These forms of communication formed a theoretical background against which the researcher made comparison with the area of study whether these do exist in the DoE or not, and if they are applied in the Department or not. Some came up as recommendations for they were not used by the Department. Chapter 4 looked at the DoE structure, and the general communication processes in any organization. The researcher tried to link or compare what obtains in the DoE with the literature on organisational communication in general. Chapter 5 addressed different styles of leadership and their impact on organisational communication. Chapter 6 explores the research methods used in the study. The determination and defining of research questions, sampling, data collection, data analysis, findings and proposed recommendations. Chapter 7 discusses the findings as revealed by case studies and questionnaires responses in relation to literature review. Chapter 8 summarizes the study and provides recommendations based on the findings of the survey.

8.3 Summary of the findings

The researcher summarized the findings as according to the objectives of the study and also in accordance with the three types of questionnaires. The first questionnaire presented being that of the principals, followed by the SEMs lastly by that of the SGBs.

The first objective was to determine the forms of communication channels and systems that are used by middle managers and senior managers in the Department of Education.

Principals

It became evident that whilst a clear form of communication is known to all the departmental officials, which is that of line function or protocol. V7 of the principals' questionnaires revealed that communication between principals and SEMs was formal mainly communicating through circulars and other written documents. On v9 where they were asked whether they had a mechanism in place to communicate their views to SEMs. Sixty three point two percent of the respondents said they do. In v10 when asked to provide the exact mechanism 36.8% did not respond whereas 35.0% responded with a 'not applicable' option. This was a clear indication that there was no such mechanism.

Principals' results revealed that SEMs have not yet transformed to become change agents. The predominant communication strategy used by them is still that of top down promulgated by the scientific school approach. Furthermore the gaps begin to inform the findings that proper communication channels are not always followed in the DoE as it was reflected in the (labour related) case study.

SEMs are the people who are the real face of the Department and it is upon them that the image of the Department is created either positively or negatively to the public

SEMs

Fifty eight point three respondents pointed at SEMs having a mechanism in place to communicate with CSEMs. Results of v8 of the SEMs who responded negatively, when asked how then do they advise top departmental officials on matters that need the Department to be proactive, if they have no mechanism in place, only 25% stated that they do that via the CSEMs. These results concur with those of the principals, that the lines of communication are restricted to top down and allow neither flexibility nor a fully representative, democratically elected formal structure to present their concerns to their supervisors.

Top management is not yet committed to open, honest communication. One other finding related to this objective was revealed by v11 where 66.7% of the SEMs reported that information to schools does not always go via their offices but is sent direct to schools; in such cases protocol is not observed. The case studies reflected that line function is not always respected. In most cases diagonal communication is used even when dealing with issues that need SEMs who are supposed to implement certain decisions taken by higher level structures.

These results revealed a minimal understanding of different forms of communication by respondents who seem not to know that diagonal communication is allowed in cases of emergencies and only then. It is necessary that there be open lines of communication, participation, and involvement of all stakeholders, and an atmosphere of facilitation, support, negotiation and consensus. Research indicates that effective superintendents are those who constantly work, inter alia, communication because problems of communication are natural and inevitable (Nobin 2004: 220).

SGBs

SGBs results revealed a top down form of communication as the dominating one however they have SGBs circuit and district forums where they can air their views. This body seems to be ineffective.

The second objective was meant to determine the effectiveness of these channels and systems of communication that are used in the Department of Education.

Principals

Sixty three point two percent of respondents' v 15 maintained that they got information from Departmental officials, however, they suggested that circulars be delivered timeously and be given reasonable time frames to respond to them. The principals at v16 with (59.6%) stated that they were not satisfied with the way information was cascaded to them. Whilst the Department provides information to schools there is still room for improvement. The results point to the fact that there was a need for this study in order to come up with recommendations of improving communication strategies. (These could be the passing down of policies and notices from head office, distributing resources, conducting inspections and audits) without integrating the skills of vision building transforming the organisational culture of education institutions, and so on (Nobin 2004: 75).

The finding here is that communication is not always effective in the DoE, taking the political related case study as an example. Managers at various levels of the Department when consulted were not aware of the discretion funds that the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) was referring to, thus the image of the Department was tainted, for making a statement that appeared to be a vague promise. Senior officials here focus on the administrative, technical and bureaucratic functions of leadership.

SEMs

Sixty six point seven percent SEMs v11, and v13 responded by saying documents from senior Departmental officials did not always come via their offices but went straight to schools and vice versa. Sometimes they come to know about the information if returns are needed and schools are not providing them on time. The SEM is then asked to follow that up. This results in time delays when deadlines are not met. This style of communication is not effective instead it creates confusion. Officials who are closer to the people are the SEMs. If they are asked for advice by principals in relation to the information needed they fail to respond, if they have not been informed.

Such omissions prove to be common in the Department if you also reflect to the case studies in chapter 2. For communication to be effective it must be managed efficiently. This is well stated by Ansari and Phillip (2001: 125) where they say “effective communication that is direct, accurate, timely and relevant is a major factor in multi-stakeholder and interprofessional collaborations”. They further state that communication should be of high quality, frequent, informative, and comfortable and allow for effective delivery of the intended messages.

SGBs

Seventy one percent of the respondents s4 maintained that the circuit forum chairperson has never invited them to meetings. This style of communication used is not effective, yet it was meant to assist SGBs to alert the EMGD unit in the district of the challenges that the SGBs face, so as to capacitate them where they fall short. They rely mostly on school principals for information. Principals may be tempted to censor information that is detrimental to their interests.

What has been observed is that the relevant structured form of communication, between the circuit forums and the SEMs or the EMGD unit lacks support as it is not performing its role functions. The other request made by SGBs was the prompt delivery of circulars. Forty percent wanted to see more workshops run for the SGBs. Conclusions drawn from the results was that communication in the Department presently is not effective particularly with the SGBs and SEMs. John Kotter cited in Nobin (2004: 220) maintains that effective communication includes simplicity, communicating via different types of forums and over various channels, leading by example in a two way communication.

The third objective was meant to determine if channels and systems of communication contribute to the effective functioning of schools.

Principals

Fifty seven point nine percent of principals' v8 with the difference of 21.2% stated that they receive circulars, legislation, policies and other departmental documents via the SEMs. The other 21.0% got information from both Unions and departmental officials. These are meant to inform them about the vision of the Department and how the Department is run and what changes are incurred by the Department. Here it is a matter of sending out regulations rules and procedures and policies to schools for implementation, with no suggestions expected as all institutions are run by law.

It is however surprising that 21.2% do not receive such critical documents via their immediate supervisors. Case studies reflect a clear picture in this regard, where a school has to function without an educator after the award has been released but because information followed the diagonal route of communication and did not go via the SEM, a delay was experienced and effective teaching was affected. The SEM could not implement the award. Nyembe-Kganye (2005: 203) recommends that eThekweni Region continues to use departmental circulars to convey information. She bases this on the fact that about 100% of the respondents in her study regarded this as useful. She feels that it can therefore be used to optimise communication. In this study although it was the most used (57.9%) nevertheless, not all principals benefited from its use.

SEMs

Seventy five percent of the SEMs v5 stated that they receive circulars, legislation, policies and other departmental documents via the CSEMs that inform them of the running of the Department and changes that are incurred by the Department which need to be relayed to schools. It reflects that the communication channels and systems contribute to the effective functioning of the schools. Here it is a matter of sending out regulations rules and procedures and the CSEMs support and monitor their implementation. Twenty five percent of the SEMs v8 communicated their suggestions to senior management through CSEMs or circuit managers. For communication to be effective people from the ground have to have means of informing senior management.

SGBs

Thirty seven percent sv5 they requested for more circulars and more workshops, for that is where they get more information. Nineteen point three percent asked for prompt information dissemination. Presently, they are not happy with the way information is cascaded to them, thus they cannot perform to their best if they are not properly informed and cannot make informed decisions towards school governance. Communication channels and systems are not effective with regard to SGBs.

The fourth objective was meant to determine the impact of leadership styles on communication.

Principals

The age of the majority of principals at 81% v1 played a role they are above 50 and they belong to the old school of thought that of compliance and not to query anything. They apply the same principles even in the present times, characterized by traditional form of rigid and autocratic leadership styles.

Fifty seven point nine are male principals who by their upbringing are dominating and believe that other people particularly females are there to follow not to share their views or to participate in decision making. Some are overwhelmed by the ever unexpected drastic changes of post 1994.

People fear change. They normally foresee the worst when change comes into effect. They view open suggestions as personal attacks, they rather not open such avenues to staff. Only 5.3% v3 communicated with their staff on personal basis. Fifty six point three percent made use of meetings to communicate with their staff. Most meetings are designed to inform subordinates of certain issues thus not allowing discussions beyond what has been prepared. The very nature of the structure of the eThekweni Region promotes gate keeping, not allowing upward flow of communication beyond the immediate supervisor.

SEMs

Seventy five percent v1 are male SEMs who share the same sentiments with the principals. The two way communication is only seen in meetings. SEMs even when given a chance to suggest ways of improving communication and its effectiveness in the eThekweni Region, nowhere did they mention networking with their colleagues in the different sub-directorates, or having open discussions with principals. Nobin (2004: 217) confirms that there is a link between the leadership orientations of many SEMs and the legacy of apartheid in the field of education management, although pockets of a more open style of management and leadership do exist.

The two case studies, one that is nutrition related and the other capacity development related call for the lateral communication, yet managers do not see value to programs integration and discussions around that. SEMs responses at 25% v14 reflected the existence of the diagonal type of communication. The intentions of this method may be good only if people are made aware of it and be sent the same information just for their information not for their attention.

The fifth objective was to determine the Departments' transformation into using e-communication.

Principals

Seventy eight point nine percent of the principal's v12 mentioned use of other forms of communication not electronic forms of communication. Again here past influences will have a part to play. There are people who are used to being instructed to do things, when given a chance to make their own decisions they are not ready to do so. They need to be well versed with current issues for them to dream and realize their dreams. There are leaders in education that cannot open a computer how much more using the internet. It will take time to convince such leaders to prioritize a computer at a school level as compared to other needs. In the rural areas probably e-communication was not mentioned because of lack of network connections. That being so, the Department has not transformed into using e-communication to model the developed countries.

SEMs

Seventy five percent SEMs as well did not mention the use of e-mails at both v5 and v10. They also did not mention receiving information from their senior officials via the E-communication. Most SEMs do not have this facility. The SEMs supervisors have not recommended that SEMs be provided with the e-mail facility which, if available, is faster and cheaper than postage, telephone and cellular phone. It also improves service delivery. SEMs are influential leaders who could influence principals under their leadership to make provision for these in their schools, provided they themselves have the e-mail facility. Maslow's x-Theory is evident in this case where people's interest and welfare are not a priority to some supervisors but work is.

Leaders should be flexible and be geared towards change and adapting to the dictates of the time. Globalisation calls for competition with the global world and that as South Africans we measure our performance, in all aspects with that of the world. Managers must be seen to be improving service delivery than to hamper it. They must however not be carried away by change and loose sight of the budget which they also manage.

According to Nyembe-Kganye (2005: 24) there were many respondents that indicated that managers were not sure of e-mail communication; this suggests that they are not exposed to it. Asking them about the usefulness of this service was like asking too much from them because some of these officials of the Department had never seen the e-mail before and how it works

Nyembe-Kganye (2005) further states that, the results of her study have proved beyond any reasonable doubt that there are forms of communication, which were not known to all employees of the Department such as e-mail, websites on internet and electronic bulletins.

8.4 General Overview of the Findings

The study revealed that all leaders from Principals to Chief Superintendent of Education Management who communicate with Superintendent of Education (SEM), much as they know participative method, very few Principals, SEMs and CSEMs practiced it. It is an area that needs much consideration.

The researcher realized their knowledge of this method when they mentioned that they were not satisfied with the way information was communicated to them. This response was two pronged. It reflected dissatisfaction with bureaucratic management style and also the ineffectiveness of the cascading method. Indeed information goes through a number of levels and tends to reach the final receiver of information late and distorted.

A basic form of leadership observed in this study is the task oriented not employee oriented. It emphasizes that employees should run with their allocated jobs and nothing more. Creativity is hampered. There is a belief that supervisees should be managed according to the book to prevent blunders that will cost the Department a lot of money as a result of managers initiatives and wrong decisions taken. It is also aimed to maintain equilibrium in all circuits, wards and schools of the eThekweni Region. Geographical position/location of schools and offices should not so much profess much diversity in management since eThekweni Region is still one family and should be guided by standardized practices regardless of geographical positions.

The leadership style practiced affects the lines of communication within the Department. Protocol is to be observed, but because of its many levels which delays communication, senior officials and other officials tend to engage in diagonal communication to fast-track information dissemination. This ends up creating tensions between middle managers and senior managers, middle managers feel betrayed or belittled when this kind of communication takes place. SEMs also showed concerns about unachievable deadlines and un-observed time frames and deadlines set, as issues that affected their service delivery in the Department. Fullan (1991) came to a conclusion that district superintendents should continually negotiate and monitor the inherently

complex relationship between control and autonomy with accountability in an attempt to stay within an acceptable space of mutual structure.

The Superintendents should lead and manage, as these two are linked, you cannot separate one from the other as has been mentioned before, in chapter 5 So far management control for SEMs is practiced by following directives coming from senior management. SGBs were brought in the study to represent a stakeholder in the Department. It was meant to verify how the Department deals with this structure with regard to communication. The SGBs results reflected that they still need more participation and information access through workshops. Presently they get information via their principals.

The other issue that came up is that their structures that form links with the Department are ineffective i.e. ward, circuit and district forums. The unit in the Department that deals directly with them is not known to a greater number of the SGB members.

Most principals have a great concern for the late delivery of circulars. There is a need for the clarification of such circulars by SEMs before the principals can give these to the educators. Reasonable time frames must be given and the Department through motivation must ensure that all schools have telephones, fax and e-mail facilities.

Principals viewed some of the following as solution to communication challenges; the postage of circulars to schools. There must be information desk at circuit offices and all information be made available daily to principals who pop in at the offices. The Department must have a year plan and there must be prior notification if there are any changes. Normally what is said is that what comes from Head Office supersedes everything.

Forums must be set and teachers be given a chance to take a leading role in these information sharing forums. SEMs and subject advisors should frequent their schools to monitor and make recommendations. All categories of respondents in conclusion pointed to a need of revisiting the ways of information sharing, because the present ones do not seem to be one hundred percent effective. Of note is that somehow these respondents focused on the much formalized means of communication and left out telephones and cellular phones which are mostly used in the Department to cover even rural areas.

The findings indicate that there is a need for proactive information strategies and developmental strategies to ensure that all managers are kept informed, on a continuous basis, about novel education policy documents that have relevance to the management of schools.

8.5 Recommendations

The recommendations are presented based on the findings. The study established that there were limited forms of communication that were used between managers and their subordinates. The predominant form being that of top-down and it proved not to be effective.

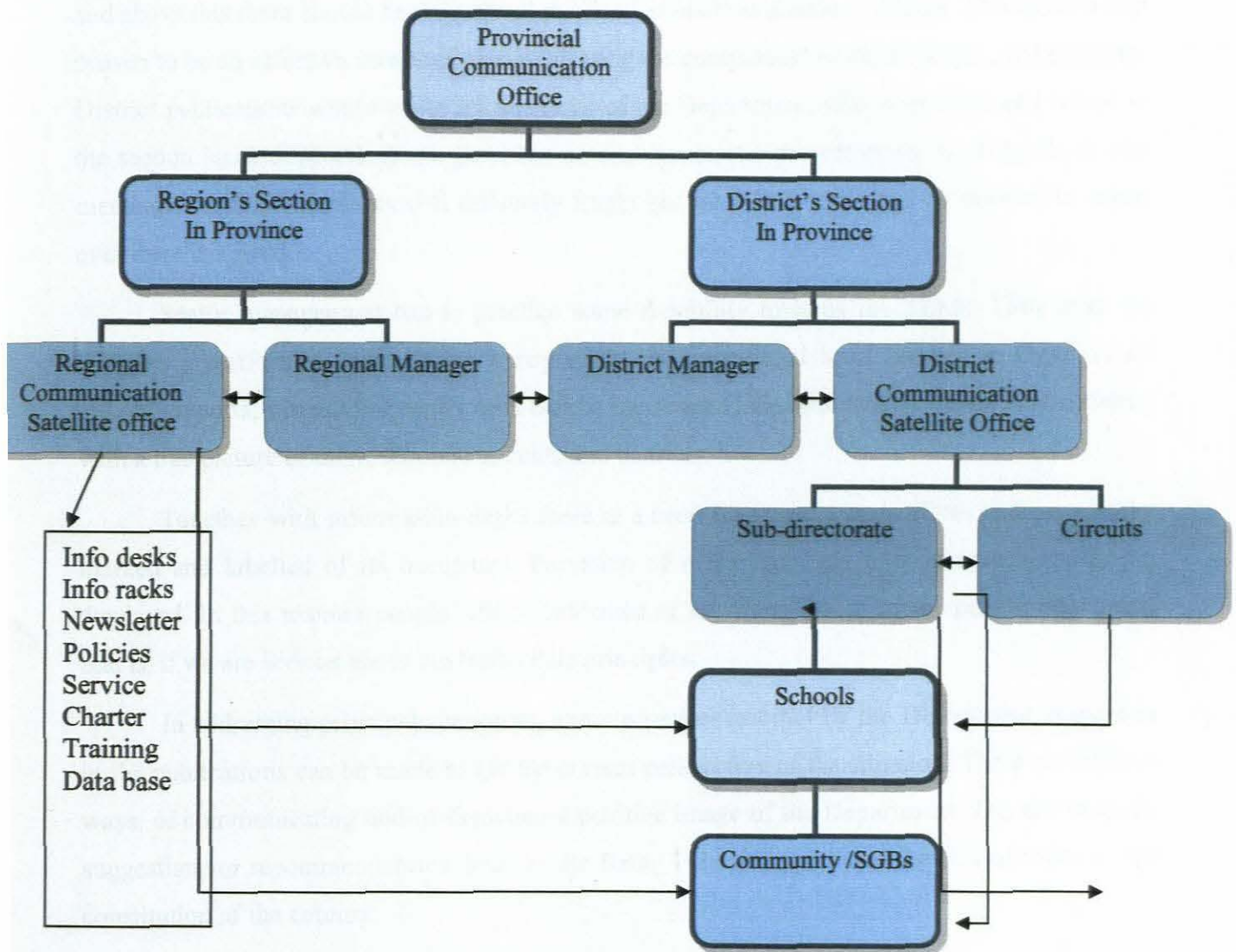
8.5.1 Easy Attainable Communication Strategy

With regard to improving communication channels, a well controlled communication structure separate from all other functions at all levels should be set. The office of the MEC seems to have a communication structure but seemingly it functions like a public relations office. There are media liaison officers who deal with queries that come from the public to the minister and are redirected to the relevant regions. This is however a political office.

One would recommend that there be a communication liason office in the education department borrowing that concept from the corporate world or private sector, with this office communication can improve. There is a quarterly news letter that is circulated quarterly through out the regions and districts, but the procedure of distribution is informal. The DoE needs the provincial office that will have satellite offices at the regional offices and district offices for employees to gain access to information about issues that touch them and education in general. The function of these offices will be responsible for the coordination of the communication plans both internally and externally, to disseminate information to the district circuit offices and schools. Monitor and evaluate progress.

Then in the same office properly filed copies of policies of all the years should be kept and made available on request. A structure like the resource centres that the department had in the past in all the regions and the districts but this one with more functions.

There should be at the level of the province two officials responsible for each region. Two more officials should be responsible for information that goes directly to each district. The same information by the provincial office that goes to the regions must also be sent directly to districts as a way of cutting of the middle man. It should be clearly indicated on the face of the document that this is for your information if it is only intended for that manager's awareness and for your attention if the manager, has to respond to that. The regional senior manager will know about this and follow it up if necessary.



When this information is received by the district communication structure, it will be quickly passed on to the relevant sub directorate for their attention. Another copy will be sent to the district director for him to be aware of and for a follow up if necessary.

At the level of the district two officials will be assigned to three sub-directorates each, and two other officials will be assigned two circuits each for the distribution of information. They will also be responsible for posting information and removal of information on the notice Boards. Reading racks could be filled with information if we want to treat our Department like real business using inexpensive methods. The delay caused by information overload on the internet will be avoided. Responses however, where necessary will follow the line function. Managers and all employees will be informed of the procedure of how does this communication

structure works. All employees will know where to get the information pertinent to their field of work, and general information about their organization in general.

To service the SGBs and the greater community a service charter may be useful. Over and above this there should be an external publication made available to clients. This method has proven to be an effective means of communicating the companies' product, people, and projects. District publications would cover all functions of the Department, who does what and where is the section located. Meetings are good but no one can master presentations by all heads in one meeting. The SGB members will definitely forget but what is in print can be referred to when ever there is a need.

Senior management has to practice some flexibility towards the SEMs. They must be afforded a platform to report what transpires at the operational level but not in the form of monthly reports, instead frequently on a face to face basis. This will provide senior management with a true picture of their, schools, circuits, and districts.

Together with information desks there is a need for signage and offices that are clearly marked and labelled of its occupants. Provision of office numbers and occupants should be displayed. In this manner people will be informed of the where-about of the people they need, that is, if we are serious about the Batho Pele principles.

In addressing principals concerns, about promises not met by the Department, responses in the publications can be made to get the correct perspective of the situation. There are various ways, of communicating and of depicting a positive image of the Department. The above made suggestions or recommendations, heed to the Batho Pele principles and the Bill of rights in the constitution of the country.

Different managers and managers in the making, need to be trained on leadership and management courses and should write examinations as it is often done lately with office based officials. To improve management skills they should undergo all courses starting from basic, intermediate to advanced management courses.

This development program needs to be properly managed, so that every manager gets a chance to attend. An audit needs to be kept of who has undergone training and which training was attended. This will assist the Department in knowing its progress with regard to development. It must also set management courses completion time frames, for those already in the management echelon so that the Department will know by a certain point in time that every

manager has undergone advanced management course. The Department will only focus on the new intake there after. Wigg 1993 cited in (SAMDI 2005) has this to say “Knowledge is the foundation of all functions and aspects of the enterprise. Without its knowledge an enterprise could not continue to exist and operate.”

8.5.2 Advanced Communication Methods

The Department can use the advance methods of communication to improve service delivery, however these are not inclusive. People, who have no electricity, can not use these methods that is why the researcher proposed a system that is inclusive first. The internet is cheap and fast and can connect with millions of computers and other electronic devices (cell-phones, portable computers, computer networks, pagers, and video cameras), via telephone lines, modems and satellites, to communicate with each other all around the world in an economical, easy-to-use way. Already some officials and schools are logged to the internet.

An intranet can facilitate communication within the internal structures of the Department. It is a kind of ‘private’ network where the organization’s working information is shared among its management and employees. The BASS, EMIS and PERSAL, are internal systems used by the DoE. Departmental issues can be accessed through the intranet and if every body is aware of the facility will make use of the facility.

Audiovisuals, videos and films can all play an effective role in employee communication. They can be used as part of the induction programme to inform new workers about company history, organization structure, products and employee benefits.

Internal television programmes, closed circuit internal television broadcast describing company progress and operations are used to communicate with employees in large corporations. This is better than calling employees from the whole province, region or district and can be cost effective.

Computer conferencing will allow all employees to log into their computers and onto the internet. Such facility can allow greater contribution from the rank and file and promote effective two way communication when asked to do so.

The telephone and voicemail service allows one to leave a message for colleagues when they are not available or are unable to pick up the phone. The receiver will be able to get the information when he comes back. This system is often used by SEMs with principals and by CSEMs with SEMs.

The internet has become, in a very short time, the ultimate tool in interactive communication in the corporate sector. Education can benefit from this too.

Web-based communication provides a method of communication that may be less hierarchical than people in the organization are used to. Groupware may upset a company's traditional environment for getting work done and lead to information overload. It may also meet with resistance from people who view the possession of information as a personal competitive advantage. It needs people who are disciplined and who respect work. It can defeat its good intended purpose.

Today, with intranet capabilities, the CEO or top management team establishes the strategic vision and sets the course. Middle management groups establish the teams, sets the targets, motivate teams, monitor results, and decide upon corrective action if necessary. The employees as well have access to a database that tracks the activities of the organization, generates reports, and uses computer-generated tools for decision-making.

Intranets tend to encourage communication to flow in a multiplicity of directions internally, and extranets and the internet do the same for flows to and from the external environment. Communication is viewed holistically and the distinction between external communication and internal communication with separate publics is no longer relevant.

With all these new electronic means of communication, the managers in the Department can and have to improve communication at all levels of the Department. All employees have to have necessary information at the convenient place and time. Using the Electronic meetings the Superintendent General can address all the managers in the whole province without wasting money on transport driving to a common venue.

8.6 Conclusion

The hypothesis that was tested reflected the following results, that

1. At *eThekwini* Region the top-down form of communication is still predominant
2. In view of the case studies, communication at *eThekwini* Region was ineffective, however the statistical results was in contradiction with the case studies picture. Results were therefore inconclusive.
3. The research results revealed that a significant percentage of managers need to change their management styles in order to change the Department. The overwhelming changes facing the Department have resulted in managers sticking to the known rather than the

unknown, i.e. the formal and rigid leadership styles that go hand in hand with the vertical down-ward form of communication. Leadership styles do influence the way we communicate.

4. The use of electronic media is still limited to a few employees and thus could not be used to improve communication strategy.

,

The main hypothesis to be tested was that *eThekwini* Region still employs the top-down form of communication which was confirmed, in this study.

Nyembe-Kganye (2005) concluded that *eThekwini* Region applies effective forms of communication, however she alluded to the fact that regions are different, and are led by people with different leadership styles. What these results reflect is that even the respondents selected, may differ in the way they perceive things. Also the different questions asked in two studies that may look similar, the questions asked may elicit different responses that will yield different results.

Results of the two studies bear similarities in the sense that departmental officials in both studies show ignorance of some forms of communication. Nyembe-Kganye stated that results in her second hypothesis, have proved beyond any reasonable doubt that there are forms of communication, which were not known to all employees of the Department such as e-mail, websites on internet and electronic bulletins.

8.7 Problems for Further Research

As several studies have been conducted in this field in Education the following topics are suggested for further research

1. The significance of the communication studies conducted at *eThekwini* Region with regard to the improvement of communication in the *eThekwini* Region.
2. Motivating leaders and managers into putting more value to communication in the Education Department as it is in the cooperate world for the successful functioning of the Department.
3. Is the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, giving communication the status it deserves, for service delivery improvement?

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Addendum: Questionnaires

VOLUNTARY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SEMs
‘Optimising organizational Communication in the Department of Education’

1. Kindly assist me by filling in this Questionnaire. This is a voluntary research project aimed at seeking ways of addressing organizational communication procedures at District, Circus and school levels of the eThekweni Region of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education & Culture for the benefit of all relevant stakeholders.
2. You are assured of utmost confidentiality in participating in this project. Your responses will only be used to benefit other colleagues in the department who may be experiencing communication problems like yourself.
3. Please read through the questions before answering.
4. In answering the questionnaire, please use a BLUE or BLACK PEN and do not make any alterations on choices made, as these will be considered spoilt responses.
5. Please use a tick (✓) in answering questions and where necessary give free

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR FILLING THIS
QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. I am a: ☐ female ☐ male

2. I am

- ☐ African ☐ Coloured ☐ Indian ☐ Jewish ☐ Oriental ☐ White
☐ a member of another ethnic group:

3. For how long have you been an SEM? years

4. How often do you have information sharing meetings with him?

- ☐ Once a week
☐ Twice a week
☐ Fortnightly
☐ Monthly
☐ Never
☐ Other Specify.....

5. How do you receive Acts, Policies, and Circulars that are relevant to work?
Through

- ☐ Colleagues
☐ Union Members
☐ Senior Departmental officials
☐ Other Specify.....

6. Do you as SEMs have measures in place to communicate your views or suggestion to the Top Senior Departmental officials?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

7. If Yes. What are they?

.....
.....
.....

8. If No. How then do you advise the top Departmental officials on issues that need the Dept. to be proactive in addressing them?

.....

.....

.....

9. How do you communicate with your schools? Through

- ☐ Telephones
- ☐ Circulars
- ☐ Meetings
- ☐ Memos

10. How do you get feedback from your school? Through

- ☐ Forms
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ written responses
- ☐ Other Specify:

11. Does the information from the District, Region, Head office always go via your office to schools?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

12. Which is the most commonly used method of communicating with your schools and Why?

.....

.....

13. Does the response from schools always come via your office to the District, Region, Head office?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

14. If the information has been sent direct to schools, how do you come to know about it?

- ☐ The District informs me
- ☐ The Region informs me
- ☐ The Head office informs me
- ☐ Through Principals who erroneously submit it to my office
- ☐ Through Principals enquiring about it from me

15. Are you satisfied with the way the information is cascaded to you?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

16. If you were given an opportunity to improve the situation what would you do?

.....

.....

VOLUNTARY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

“Optimising organizational Communication in the Department of Education”

1. Kindly assist me by filling in this Questionnaire. This is a voluntary Research project aimed at seeking ways of addressing organizational communication procedures at District, Circuits and school levels of the eThekweni Region of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education & Culture for the benefit of all relevant stakeholders.
2. You are assured of utmost confidentiality in participating in this project. Your responses will only be used to benefit other colleagues in the department who may be experiencing communication problems like yourself.
3. Please read through the questions before answering.
4. In answering the questionnaire, please use a BLUE or BLACK PEN and do not make any alterations on choices made, as these will be considered spoilt responses.
5. Please use a tick (✓) in answering questions and where necessary give free responses.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR FILLING IN THIS

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. ☐ I am..... years old
2. I am a: ☐ female ☐ male
3. I am:
☐ African ☐ Coloured ☐ Indian ☐ Jewish ☐ Oriental ☐ White
☐ a member of another ethnic group:
4. For how long have you been a Principal...years?
5. How often do you have information sharing sessions with your SEMs?
☐ Fortnightly
☐ Monthly
☐ Quarterly
☐ Only when there is a need
☐ Never
6. How often do you have information sharing sessions with other departmental officials (e.g. Subject Advisors?)
☐ Fortnightly
☐ Monthly
☐ Quarterly
☐ Only when there is a need
☐ Never
7. Normally how do Department officials communicate with you?
☐ Workshops
☐ Meetings
☐ Circulars
☐ Documents
☐ All of the above
☐ Other specify.....
8. How do you receive Legislation, Circulars and policies that relate to your work and that of educators? Through
☐ Colleagues
☐ Unions
☐ Senior Dept. officials
☐ Other specify.....

9. Do you have a mechanism in place to communicate your views / suggestions to Senior Departmental officials?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. If Yes. What are they?

.....

.....

.....

11. If No. How then do you make positive inputs to the Senior Departmental officials?

.....

.....

.....

12. What would you suggest to be a means of reaching out to Senior Departmental officials?

.....

.....

.....

13.How do you communicate with your staff?

- ☐ Personal basis
- ☐ Circulars
- ☐ Meetings
- ☐ Memos etc .
- ☐ All of the above

13. What mechanism do you have in place to get inputs and feedback from your staff?

.....

.....

.....

14. Do you always get Departmental information via your Circuit office?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

16. Are you satisfied with the way the information is cascaded to you?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

17. Given a chance what would you do to improve the way of communication in the Department?

.....

.....

.....

VOLUNTARY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

“Optimising organizational Communication in the Department of Education”

1. Kindly assist me by filling in this Questionnaire. This is a voluntary Research project aimed at seeking ways of addressing organizational communication procedures at District, Circuits and school levels of the eThekwin Region of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education & Culture for the benefit of all relevant stakeholders.
2. You are assured of utmost confidentiality in participating in this project.
3. Your responses will only be used to benefit other colleagues in the Department who may be experiencing communication problems like yourself.
4. Please read through the questions before answering.
5. In answering the questionnaire, please use a BLUE or BLACK PEN and do not make any alterations on choices made, as these will be considered spoilt responses.
6. Please use a tick () in answering questions and where necessary give free responses.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR FILLING IN THIS
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How often do you have SGB meetings?

- ☐ Once a week
- ☐ Every two weeks
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once a term
- ☐ Never

2. How do you access information relevant to the functioning of SGBs? (Tick the most used form of communication)

- ☐ Principals
- ☐ Circuits Forum
- ☐ All of the above
- ☐ None of the above

3. In which way do you mostly raise your concerns to the Senior Departmental officials? (Tick the most used form of communication)

- ☐ Principals
- ☐ Circuits Forum
- ☐ District Forum
- ☐ All of the above
- ☐ None of the above

4. How often does the Chairperson of the Circuit forum invite you to circuit forum meetings?

- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Once a term
- ☐ Never calls us

5. What is the role of the School Governance Unit in the districts? State one function.

.....

6. What would you like to see happening so as to be kept informed of relevant issues in the department?

.....

VOLUNTARY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SGB'S

Ukunyusa izinga lokuxhumana ngokomsebenzi noMnyango Wezemfundo Namasiko

1. Ngicela ungisize uphendule le mibuzo elandelayo. Lolu ucwaningo lokuzama ukunyusa izinga lokuxhumana ngokomsebenzi noMnyango Wezemfundo Namasiko esifundeni saseThekwini ,KwaZulu-Natal. Kusuka kumadisktrithi kuya emasekethini kuze kufinyelele ezikoleni. Imiphumela yalolucwaningo izoba nosizo kakhulu kulabo ababambe iqhaza kwezemfundo.
2. Uyaqinisekiswa ukuthi igama lakho liyogcinwa liyimfihlo noma nini. Izimpendulo zakho ziyosiza wena nabanye abasebenzisana noMnyango Wezemfundo abazithola benenkinga yokuxhumana noMnyango.
3. Uyacelwa ukuba ufunde yonke imibuzo ngaphambi kokuba uphendule.
4. Uyacelwa ukuba usebenzise ipeni lika-inki, ungalokothi uxikize ngoba loko kuyokwenza okubhalile kungamukelwa.
5. Phendula ngokwenza loluphawu (×). Lapho okudingeka ugcwalise ngamagama akho wenze njalo.

Ngiyobonga kakhulu uma uphendule ngokuzimisela nangokuthembeka.

1. Nihlangana kangaki niyi SGB?

- Kanye ngesonto
- Njalo emasontweni amabili
- Kanye ngenyanga
- Kanye ezinyangeni ezintathu
- Asilokothi sihlangane

2. Uyithola kanjani imininingwane ephathelene nokusebenza kwe SGB?

- KuThishanhloko
- Kunamalunga e SGB akwezinye izikole
- Emhlanganweni ebizwa izikhulu zemfundo
- Kumalunga e SGB esikole sethu

3. Nizidlulisa kanjani izikhalo zenu emnyangweni Wezemfundo?

- NgoThishanhloko
- Amaforamu esekethe
- Amaforamu edistrithi
- Ngazo zonke lezi zindlela ezingenhla
- Ayikho neyodwa kwezingenhla izindlela esiyisebenzisayo

4. Unibiza kangaki usihlalo weforamu yesekethe emhlanganweni?

- Kanye ngenyanga
- Kanye ngekota
- Akasibizi nhlobo

5. Yisho umsebenzi owodwa wophiko olwengamele amaSGB's kwidistrithi.

6. Yini ongafisa yenziwe uMnyango Wezemfundo ukuze uhlale unolwazi olufanele noluhambisana nesikhathi ngezinto ezithinta amaSGB's.
